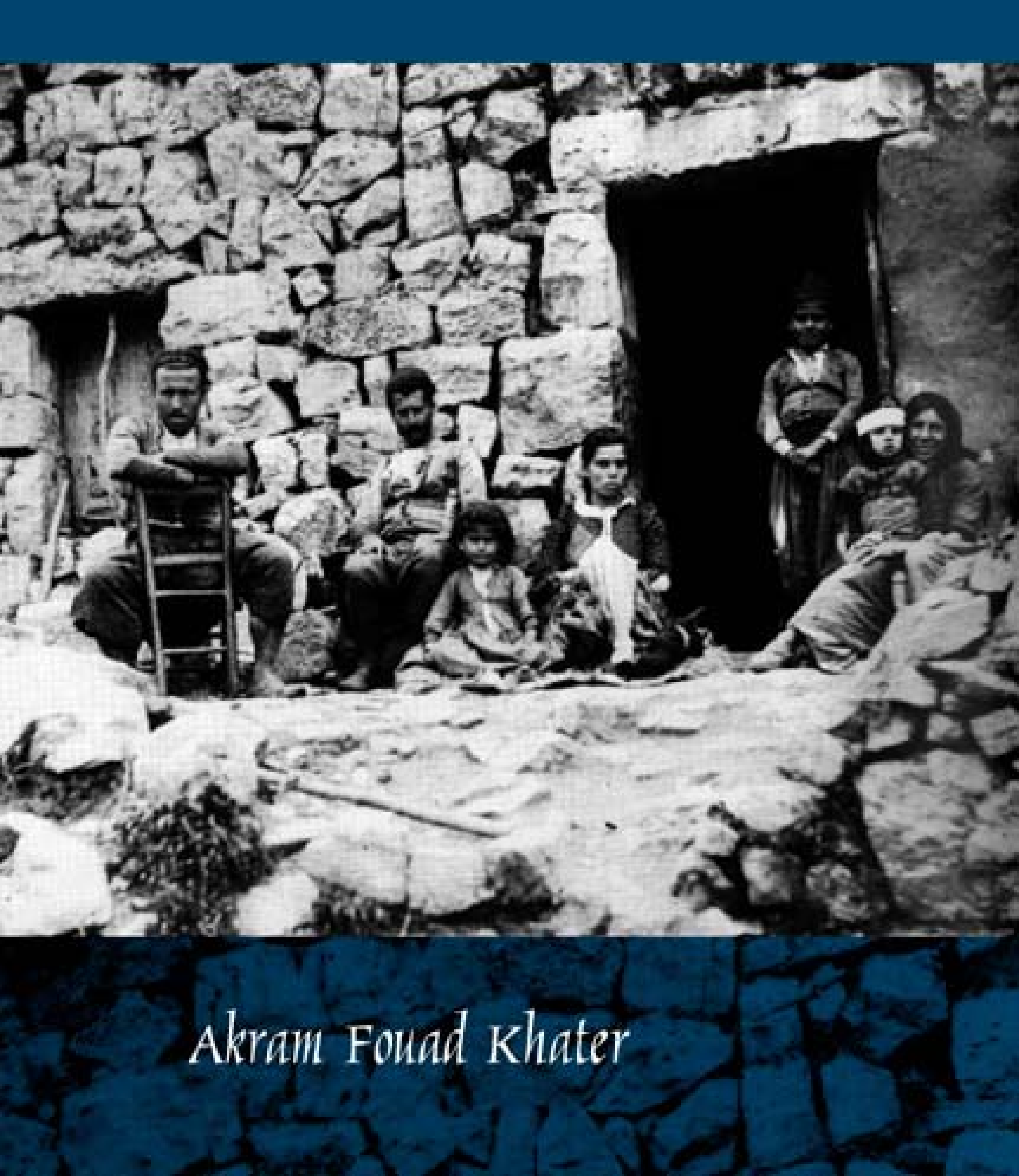
Inventing Home

Emigration, Gender, and the Middle Class in Lebanon, 1870-1920



Akram Fouad Khater

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To Jodi,
rūḥayn b-rūḥ

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Acknowledgments

Surrounded by my research notes, books, and articles, I spent the better part of two years tapping away at the keyboard of my computer in an attempt to write this book. Alone with my own thoughts, I alternated between reveling in crystalline visions of my intellectual purpose (alas far too briefly) and being lost in a labyrinth of ideas so twisted as to induce hyperventilation. With such a contradictory existence (which climaxed at times in hysterical laughter), it would have been far too easy to become hopelessly lost on my scholarly journey—never reaching an end point. However, the support, advice, critical readings, and sense of humor with which colleagues and family showered me helped me stay the course and reach the moment when I can acknowledge all that they have done on my behalf.

Research is a rather expensive undertaking. Thus, the financial support of scholars has, and continues to be, crucial in their work. My case is no different. I was able to undertake this work only because of the extremely generous support of the Fulbright Commission (DDRA grants), a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (which permitted me to take a year's leave of absence from my university), a grant from the American Philosophical Society, and last—but certainly not least—the support that my home institution, North Carolina State University, has afforded me through several research stipends and grants.

In gathering information for my project, I have been aided by the constant support of numerous archivists and librarians. First and foremost is the interlibrary loan staff at North Carolina State University:

Marihelen Stringham, Gary Wilson, Baker Ward, Ann Rothe, and Mimi Riggs. Despite my endless—and sometimes unreasonable—requests, they never failed to work hard and creatively in tracing even the most esoteric of manuscripts. And, despite my chronic tardiness in returning books, they still accepted my requests for yet more books with kindness and hardly a reprieve. At the archives of the Smithsonian Museum of American History, I was most fortunate to be able to make use of the Alexa Naff Arab American Collection. Gathered and indexed through the diligent work of Alexa Naff—herself a pioneer in the study of Arab emigration to the United States—this collection proved to be a treasure trove of glimpses into the lives of some emigrants from Lebanon. Cathy Keen, the archivist in charge of the collection, was most generous with her time and advice about finding particular documents within the collection. Finally, the librarians and archivists at the Jafet Library at the American University of Beirut made every effort to facilitate my work there—from welcoming me as a researcher to helping me obtain the only remaining copies of many magazines and newspapers published at the turn of the twentieth century in Lebanon.

Beyond research stretched the whole expanse of the writing experience. Once I began to write, I needed, and received, all the help I could get. Most critical in this process was my wife, Jodi. Without her, I can say in all sincerity, this book would never have been completed. Her support sustained me at more than one level. She comforted me through my anxiety-ridden episodes, when I came to the conclusion that the whole business of writing was pointless and absurd. But, more critically, she helped me focus on the subject of the book through long and patient hours of discussions and intellectual explorations. She kept pushing me to clarify my ideas in the simplest language, never allowing me to obfuscate my intellectual uncertainties with jargon. She read everything I wrote more than once and wrote extensive comments that never failed to improve my narrative and give my ideas a meaningful structure. The best parts of this book are as much hers as mine.

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times, I have had the privilege of receiving advice and support from one of the best historians I have ever known, David Gilmartin. David, whose sense of humor and sharp intellect are legendary in the history department at North Carolina State University, spent many lunches (sometimes in the same day) discussing ideas, methods, and analytical categories of history. He always questioned my thoughts in a way that made constructive sense and made me go back to the manuscript with a clearer sense of purpose. (Buying me lunch also helped out greatly, although I wish he did it more often.) Anthony La Vopa was another colleague who had to suffer through an early version of this manuscript—while vacationing, no less. He meticulously went through every page locating gaps—large and small—as well as identifying strengths. His sense of humor about my trials and tribulations was the perfect antidote to my feelings of persecution and self-pity. Alex DeGrand also read and commented on the manuscript, always graciously and encouragingly praising my effort and propelling me forward with his kind words. Holly Brewer, my office mate for the first four years of my tenure at North Carolina State University, opened my mind to new possibilities in my work through her conversations about American history. Many other colleagues in the department also contributed through years of dialogue and seminar presentations—all of which advanced my knowledge and my training as a historian. I thank them all.

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I would also like to thank Bruce Lawrence and Miriam Cooke for their suggestion of the title of this book.

1

A Departure from the Ordinary

There were 72 of us, we went to Beirut where we remained for eight days, living outdoors. . . . Finally, one night the Beirut agents came and said "let's go." They directed us through a small canyon and we continued walking until we got to the sea. There were three Turkish officers there whom they bribed. Then they put us in an open boat and took us to Cyprus which was under British rule. And they got us tickets for a French ship.

—Michel Haddy, interview, 1962

This is how Michel Haddy described his journey to the United States. After a circuitous voyage through Beirut (where the passengers did not disembark) and Alexandria, the ship deposited the villagers from ^{c}Ayn ^{c}Arab in Marseilles. From there they traveled to Le Havre, where they and "about 250 Syrians from Zahlé, from Matn, from everywhere" boarded another steamboat for New York. Eighteen days later they emerged from amidst the "cattle, pigs and other animals and the terrible smell," terrified that they would be turned back. "But thank God no one from ^{c}Ayn ^{c}Arab was rejected."[1]

There are over two hundred thousand such stories of—predominantly Christian—peasants who left their villages in Mount Lebanon to travel to the Americas in the twenty-five years following 1890. Their departures from their quotidian lives into a world unknown to them, except through a mist of physical and mental distance, are remarkable. Yet few historians have chronicled these extraordinary voyages, and those who have recount

only part of the story.[2] Their books tell—not always accurately—of the reasons which prompted peasants to leave their mountainous villages. They speak of the voyages and the arrivals in the *mahjar,* the money they sent back, and the "assimilation" of those who stayed.[3] But nothing is said about a host of other matters, the most critical of which is the story of return. Except for a sprinkling of passing remarks, we never encounter those many who went back to the Mountain. We learn nothing about their experience of return, what they brought back with them, how they were received, and their role in the making of "modern" Lebanon.

This book is intended to remedy such oversight by tracing the journeys of these villagers from the ranks of the peasantry into a middle class of their own making. I wish to write of the struggles of Lebanese peasants to control their destiny amidst the swirling forces of the world capitalist system. And I wish to remedy the scholarly silence about the social history of Lebanon between 1860 and 1920. Most important, however, and in addition to these two issues, I believe that the journeys of peasants have much to tell us about the historical dynamics which made "modern" Lebanon. Embedded in these travels are the stories of how new notions of gender, family, and class were articulated and of how "modernity" was invented in the process. My intent is not to draw a linear and inevitable line between a peasant start and a middle-class end along which these peasants dutifully marched into a spot in history. Instead, I will try to map out the jagged and uncertain paths which the fellahin from Mount Lebanon carved through time and space in their attempt to control their future and their destinies. Along the way, this narrative will shed much needed light on the impact of emigration and immigration on "nations," it will explore new areas in the history of Lebanon, and it will delve into the complex relationships among gender, family, and class.

More specifically, in unpacking these narratives I wish to elucidate how a class was formed both socioeconomically and culturally. This analytical duality is essential, yet it has been largely missing from studies about the Middle East. Studies about "modernity" in the Middle East have tended to concentrate on the cultural construction of this imagined state of being. This cultural emphasis has been a most welcome addition to the field, one which has helped shed significant light on seemingly well-worn subjects and has as well introduced new images into our historical vision. However, the great majority of these works set about deconstructing "modernity" without explaining how a "middle class" came into existence in the first place. Constructing such an explanation is necessary not merely

to satisfy curiosity; it is rather a critical step toward a more sophisticated and organic understanding of the making of the "modern." This additional analysis is necessary because the processes through which a class forms in classical socioeconomic terms shape the construction of its particular ethos, even as that culture helps to maintain and shape class boundaries. Or, as Kumkum Sangari and Sudesh Vaid note for the case of India, "the relation between classes and patriarchies is complex and variable. Not only are patriarchal systems class differentiated, open to constant and consistent reformulation, but defining gender seems to be crucial to the formation of classes and dominant ideologies."[4] Thus, our comprehension and explanation of the rise of "modernity" will remain lacking unless we incorporate into our narratives an examination of the socioeconomic journeys of the middle class, which embodied and exuded "modernity." Only then can we possibly overcome the circularity of the middle-class narrative which places it outside history.

Finally, through exploring the journeys of these peasants, I want to elucidate how the "traditional" past of this new class was integral to the making of its own "modern"—a set of ideas and a material culture that its members subsequently used to distinguish themselves from their peasant heritage. In consciously tracing the links between the two historical times and groups, we can discover that the culture of the peasant past remained ever-present in the modern lives of middle-class men and women. This past was not a mere residue but a powerful factor which contoured the shapes of the "modernity" that many ex-peasants were engaged in constructing as they remade themselves into a middle class. Only by taking this mental step back and looking at the larger process can we fully appreciate its engineering complexity. Beyond marveling at accomplishments, through this retreat from a narrow historical focus we can discard the artificial bipolarities of "modern" and "traditional" because it renders them meaningless.

In order to further elaborate the premises of this book, I will proceed in the remainder of this chapter to discuss "modernity" and the ways that class, gender, and family were used to construct this state of being. Additionally, I will define what I mean by these terms through a discussion of their theoretical employment in current scholarship, as well as by introducing my own extensions of some of those definitions. In a subsequent section I will explore the relationship between emigration and the making of "modernity." I will conclude by presenting a sketch of the contents of the book.

A Local "Modern"

"Modernity" is an elusive term. Yet, ever since the Industrial Revolution, "modernity" has figured prominently in "Western" discourses. Many Europeans came to identify themselves—not in an entirely comfortable manner—as "modern."[5] The idea and the term have been the subjects of intense scholarly interest, debate, and arguments beginning with Marx and Weber and reaching to the present.[6] Similarly, beginning in the nineteenth-century, "modernity" came to occupy an increasingly prominent position in the words and programs of "reformers" in the Middle East. Newspapers, speeches, and government edicts were filled with words such as *reform, new, modern, scientific, advanced,* and *rational.* From the policies of the *Tanzimat* in the Ottoman Empire to articles in the nascent women's press in Iran, Egypt, and the Levant, the focus for an emerging middle-class elite was on "modernizing" family, society, and nation. To varying degrees, both the European imperial and the indigenous discourses on the "modern" came to depend on—and construct—absolute polarities of modern and traditional, secular and religious, rational and emotional. Within the European imperialist narratives, these dichotomies were all located around a new colonial geography which separated the world neatly and profoundly into West and Orient. Many local—and later nationalist—discourses on the "modern" reacted to this colonial mapping of the world by emphasizing their "modernity" in the face of claims to the contrary. In other words, they accepted this polarity but rejected the label of being "traditional"—even as they sought to redefine, successfully and otherwise, that "modernity" after their own images.

To transcend the historical obliqueness of these construed dichotomies, we must, as Paul Rabinow argues, look at how ideas of modernity have been produced and reproduced at particular historical times and places.[7] Scholarship on the Middle East has begun to do just that. For example, various scholars have looked at how the category of "woman" was invented, defined, and produced for mass consumption at the level of the upper and middle classes.[8] These studies are meant to explain how creating a "scientized" cult of domesticity within an isolated nuclear household presided over by women and dedicated to reproducing and rearing good sons for the "nation" was integral to the larger projects of "modernization" that were taking place in many areas of the Middle East. All was "rationalized" on the premise of liberating women

by ascribing positive attributes to these roles and by providing young girls with new educational opportunities and an improved material life. Yet, this project was simultaneously creating a new patriarchal order that subjected women to "new forms of control and discipline."[9] Gender, in this critical context, becomes a contingent individual identity as well as a set of social relations. Both are imagined and applied in any one particular configuration because of the confluence of economic, social, and political forces at a specific historical time. In turn, gender shapes other sets of identity, like class and sect, and becomes an integral element in the making of other imagined communities, such as the "nation." Thus gender is not simply a "social category imposed on a sexed body" but is instead a part of every other set of social relations whose transformations make up history.[10]

Equally, the meaning of the term *family* becomes far more fluid when viewed from the perspective that these new studies of "modernization" are affording us.[11] For example, by examining the discursive formulations of the "nuclear" household over time, these studies oblige us to abandon the assumption that a family is a fixed and static structure that is constantly reproduced through procreation and socialization.[12] Instead, we find that the family has to be contextualized as yet another set of dynamic social relations between individuals of varying ages with rather unequal decision-making powers. Furthermore, these relations are not set but vary over time in relationship to external and internal changes. For example, as other scholars have noted and as we shall see in this book, the role and meaning of "mother" within a family changes over time and not always in a coherent manner with which every member of the family is comfortable. Likewise, the responsibilities of parents to children, and the reverse as well, change with the increase in educational and physical distance between them. Conflict between individual desires and familial obligations creates tensions that alter the power dynamics within the family and change the nature of its constitutive relations. In other words, family—like gender, nation, and class—is a construction whose meaning and meaningfulness are contested from within and without at particular historical times. The articulation of family, gender, and class is, in turn, embroiled in the project of "modernization." So, to be "modern" is to be a "nuclear" family, and a "nuclear" family projects an air of "modernity."

Thus, in questioning the ways "woman" and "family" were construed, I—along with other contemporary scholars—seek to critically appraise and understand the dynamics of the process of "modernization," which lasted through the better half of the nineteenth century and is still continuing

today. In other words, we attempt to define the "modern" in the Middle East by examining the particular ways that the categories of "women," "family," and "class" were articulated.

But we need to go beyond examining the hidden elements which make up the "modern." We need to understand the multiplicity and the contradictory natures of the discourses that collectively make up the historical process of "modernity." As anthropologist Michelle Rosaldo put it, we need to pursue a meaningful explanation and not a universal explanation of causality.[13] More to the point, and as Michel Foucault suggested, for the notion that social power is unified, coherent, and centralized we need to substitute a concept of power as dispersed groups of unequal relationships, discursively constituted in social "fields of force."[14] In other words, we cannot assume that "modernization" was a monolithic and seamless construction. Rather, the competing arguments that arose in the face of the new ideals of a domesticated "womanhood" and an enfeebled femininity were part of the making of the "modern." Many such "voices" represented differing interests. Religious elites were loathe to accept the secularization of morality, wherein women come to be the arbiters—in however limited a form—of societal mores and habits. Conservative observers saw in Qasim Amin's "New Woman" a threat to "classic patriarchy."[15] However, feminists, who were working from within the confines of the emerging middle classes, sought to dismantle the separation of their daily world into gendered spheres, where women were to occupy a disempowered, if gilded, home. They used the language of rationality and science to perforate the boundaries between these spheres and to challenge the new roles. Yet the language which they used was embroiled in the project of "modernization" and thus limited in its ability to disassemble the edifices of gender inequality. Herein lies a problem that a few scholars, such as Mervat Hatem and Marilyn Booth, have begun to remark on.[16]

However, even acknowledging and investigating the dialectical intricacy of "modernization" projects is still not sufficient. I strongly believe that to complete the debunking of the mythology of "modernization" we cannot continue to confine our analytical attention to the boundaries of its culture and to the language of its self-making narratives. Such a restricted analysis would by necessity limit us as it also confined contemporaneous feminists who were seeking to question the hegemonic relationship inherent in the proposed gender roles and family structures. Hence, we need to extend our own critical analysis beyond the narrow boundaries of the elite classes and the signifying language and material

culture of "modernity." We need to examine the roots from which the occupants of that class wish so eagerly to dissociate themselves: the peasantry. We have to bring class to bear on our subjects of study, and we need to do so at two levels. First, we have to link social and cultural history in ways that connect discursive signifiers to social relations. As Joan Scott notes, "Gender is a constitutive element of social relationships based on perceived differences between the sexes, and gender is a primary way of signifying relationships of power. Changes in the organization of social relationships always correspond to changes in representation of power, but the direction of change is not necessarily one way."[17] Plainly put, we have to ask how narratives are related to tangible daily lives. To assume that words solely shape history is as unsatisfying as the notion that material forces are the only pertinent historical analytical criteria. Within the socioeconomic formation of a distinct middle class, we have clues as to how and why members of that class constructed and adopted particular notions of gender roles and family relations. In turn, these ideological premises define and shape class as a distinct social grouping along a hierarchical ladder.

Second, we need to introduce a vertical view of class into our analysis of the multilayered language of "modernity." For the most part, scholars have generally looked at the discursive productions of the middle class and its own internal ideas of the "modern." Yet, that language and its symbolism are not wholly contained within the boundaries of middle-class life. Some of that language—especially in opposition to the construction of private and public spheres—came from outside the experiences of that class. For example, as I will show later in this book, in Lebanon the language of feminism came from the recent historical memories of women working in the fields and silk factories and later of emigrant women working in the streets of the *mahjar.* These mental images stood in direct opposition to the middle-class notion of a fragile femininity which supposedly could not withstand the trials and tribulations of the world outside the confines of the "modern" house. Moreover, these images were critical not only as part of the feminist critique of bourgeois domesticity but also as an element of the daily lives of many middle-class women. Again, as we will see later on, in order to physically and intellectually transcend the boundaries of the "house," these women continued to draw consciously and otherwise on memories of life and work in the field, factory, and street.

Exploring this link between peasant past and middle-class present is, therefore, not incidental but fundamental to the historical formation of

"modernity." Even when—and because—the literature and popular writing of the middle class submerged the connections to a peasant past, we as historians have to unearth that genealogy of identity. We need to do so in order to increase our understanding of particular histories, to give subaltern groups their due, and ultimately to dissipate the binding and hegemonic ideas of "modernity."[18]

"Bound by Distance"[19]

For Lebanon, the argument above is even more compelling because of emigration. Most studies of "modernity" rightfully identify encounters with the "West" as part of the beginning of that historical process, but they tend to focus on individuals who travel beyond a particular "cultural space."[20] However, in the case of Lebanon, it was not just a handful of people who traveled to the "West"; over a third of the population of the Mountain made this journey between 1890 and the onset of World War I. Through these large physical movements a new matrix of social relations was woven around multiple axes, the most prominent of which were sect, gender, family, and class.[21] It is not only sheer numbers that give a different dynamic to this process. The fact that the overwhelming majority of these emigrants were peasants makes the link between "modernity" and "tradition" all the more strong and relevant to the history of the middle class and its culture. Yet, this link between peasant emigration and the making of a middle class in Lebanon has never been explored.

It is not surprising that emigrants get cursory mention in the history of "nations." As imagined communities seeking to establish concrete boundaries—which must appear longstanding within a "national" past and culture—"nations" cannot easily accommodate those who leave or enter their borders. Such movements question the very idea that culture is tied to a physical space from whence it emerges and without which it cannot exist. As people come and go, they disrupt this self-contented assumption by transporting and transforming cultures. Amidst these migrations, a "unique" national culture becomes untenable intellectually. Thus, narratives of "nations" have included emigrants and immigrants in a limited way: they are either going or coming but not both.

The difficulty in doing justice to the reality of the shuttling emigrant is evident in the tomes dedicated to the history of the United States—

among others. As one scholar complained, "Historians of the United States find research on immigration most relevant when it addresses the Crèvecoeurian theme of making Americans."[22] This motif stipulated that the "new man . . . is an American who, leaving behind all ancient prejudices and manners, received new manners from the new mode of life he has embraced."[23] Refined over time, with less emphasis on the crude and vacuous notion of the United States as a "melting pot," this basic premise has nonetheless endured. It has even experienced a renaissance of late amidst the ongoing "culture debates," with authors like Arthur Schlesinger arguing that within the cultural diversity there is still (and must be) an American essence, or "man" if you will.[24] With such an overly didactic view of Americanization, it becomes difficult to confront the fact that large numbers of financially successful emigrants rejected "America" as an idea and reality. But they did.

Noting that missing link, scholarship on "diaspora" has begun to call into question these nationalist claims to unique histories formed in culturally pristine spaces.[25] Paul Carter summarized the argument of this new body of literature: "It becomes more than ever urgent to develop a framework of thinking that makes the migrant central, not ancillary, to historical processes. We need to disarm the genealogical rhetoric of blood, property and frontiers and to substitute for it a lateral account of social relations, one that stresses the contingency of all definitions of self and the other."[26] On a less theoretical level, there have been many calls within the field of immigration history to include the stories of return.[27] Heeding such calls are scholars like Donna Gabaccia and Dino Cinel, both of whom wrote about the return of southern Italian emigrants to their villages and towns.[28] Yet the writing of these stories remains difficult and stilted. One practical reason is that it is frustrating to retrace the footsteps of emigrants. Peasants—illiterate for the most part—left few records of their journeys or their thoughts on such matters. Additionally, most historians, trained as they are in a "national" field, can write easily of the point of departure or of entry, but rarely of both. This handicap limits the ability of most immigration historians to speak of the homes that peasants left and did not leave, let alone of those homes to which they went back after many intervening years.

More seriously, even those immigration historians who criticize the resurrection of the Crèvecoeurian myth cannot completely elude it as long as they operate within the boundaries of national history. For example, Gary Grestle has noted that one of the main contributions of the "new" social historians of immigration is their "discovery of return migration

and sojourning." Many southern and eastern European immigrants ("perhaps a majority," according to Gabaccia) had no intention of staying in the United States.[29] Yet, in the next paragraph Grestle hastens to praise the "new" historians of Americanization for acknowledging that a "majority of the new immigrants stayed in America."[30] In fact, and depending on the sources one chooses to believe, anywhere from 25 to 60 percent of all those who emigrated to the United States made a permanent return trip to their place of birth.[31] These percentages not only make Grestle's statement incorrect but require explanations that transcend "national" narratives.

Historians of Lebanon have been likewise blinded by the artificial borders of "national" history. Focused as most have been on events that took place in Mount Lebanon, these scholars appear to have barely noticed that over one third of the people left and many came back. For instance, in a volume that contained thirty-five articles about Lebanese emigration to various parts of the world, none addressed the experiences of return emigration. Only one article, by Kohei Hashimoto, spoke of the need to begin filling in this scholarly gap. He wrote, "While stress has been placed on Lebanon as a major population exporting region in the Middle East in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, another important reality was unintentionally set aside: the reality that Lebanon was also a receiver of population flow from the New Continent—in the form of Lebanese return migration."[32] In addition, the sojourns of seven, eight, or twenty years by tens of thousands are glossed over because, from the chroniclers' perspective, a "national" culture can be "found" only in a bounded space. In other words, a unique identity, which was necessary to claim a place for Lebanon among the nations of the world, had to be drawn from the annals of events in the Mountain. Emigrants did not fit that formula. On the one hand, any study of their experiences in the *mahjar* would quickly reveal that there was no such thing as "Lebanon." Conversations, debates, and arguments which took place in New York and Buenos Aires manifested the ambiguity and irrelevance—in many ways—of a "national" identity. Initially, family, village, and religion (in that order) provided the markings of peasants' communities. And it was only after years of residence in the *mahjar* that class, as defined through new gender roles and family structures, came to provide boundaries for a new communal identity. In comparison, the label of "Lebanese" developed only uncertainly and painfully over time.[33]

On the other hand, to take into account the experiences of emigrants and their influence on "Lebanese" society is to admit that culture is not

derived from pure and localized *volk* "traditions." Or, as James Clifford wrote, "if we rethink culture . . . in terms of travel, then the organic, naturalizing bias of the term culture—seen as a rooted body that grows, lives, dies, etc.—is questioned. Constructed and disputed *historicities,* sites of displacement, interference, and interaction, come more sharply into view."[34] Maronite historians, who wrote in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, immortalized these "traditions" in stories about the "original" Maronites who refused to acquiesce to Arab "domination" and thus remained "pure."[35] Later historians and folklorists only solidified this impression in the minds of the Maronite community and made it seem as "natural" as the rugged land surrounding them.[36] Countervailing historical narratives dismissed this specificity without rejecting its organic ties to a "land." Instead, in these stories the land is expanded to subsume Lebanon within a greater Syria or a Pan-Arab "nation." In all cases, local culture—be it Maronite, Syrian, or Arab—supposedly derived from the quintessential and faceless "masses." Such claims leave no room for habits acquired by emigrants in Uruguay or "traditions" developed in Connecticut, even when these novelties are part of the identity of a "modern" Lebanon.

A Different View

Yet, without the history of emigrants, we are left with a sorely incomplete narrative about the making of "modern" Lebanon. We become trapped in essentializing narratives that cannot explain history except in bits and pieces and that simply mystify and mythologize the past. Thus, we find that most of the scholarship on nineteenth-century Lebanon reduces that period to the events of the year 1860, when Maronite peasants rose against their *shuyukh* ("feudal" landlords) in rejection of the *iqta*ʿ ("feudal") system.[37] At that historical moment, the *ancien régime* presumably passed into the folds of time and was replaced by a "modern" Lebanon. Without making light of the importance of this event, this approach is nonetheless problematic because it makes too simple and complete a leap between the pre-1860 and post-1860 periods.[38] Furthermore, the great bulk of this historical literature concludes its minimal investigation in the year 1860, without giving the slightest explanation as to how subsequent years were affected by events prior to 1860. Of greater relevance to this study is the fact that the majority of history books

dealing with Lebanon are mute about the years between the 1860 civil war and World War I. Then, suddenly, historical narratives of modern Lebanon speak of a middle class that appears after World War I and that is—more important—considered profoundly critical to the "uniqueness" of the new nation. We are left with few explanations of what this "modernity" means or of how, when, and why it came to be in the first place. In other words, this narrative assumes an essential "nature" that is ahistorical and that is proposed as an innate characteristic of "Lebanon" and the "Lebanese."

This dissatisfying and gaping analytical hole is generated in large part by an almost total absence of any serious historical consideration of gender, family, and class. Throughout the peasant revolts, radical economic shifts and tumbles, political changes, and social dislocation, the "family"—if seriously considered at all—remained unchanged in the view of these historians. The Lebanese peasant family at the end of the nineteenth century thus appears exactly the same as that of the eighteenth, seventeenth, and even sixteenth centuries. Gender has fared even worse. Except for Jacqueline des Villettes's study of the lives of peasant women within Lebanese patriarchal society, little else is to be found anywhere in the annals of Lebanese history.[39] Buried under the label of family, peasant women appear as simply a part of the family, a subunit of the clan structure. Since they are viewed mostly as happy matrons, no exploration is ever offered of peasant women as individuals, nor are the conflicts and unequal power relations within families apparent.[40] Not surprisingly, then, we cannot begin to understand how these tensions were central to the making of "modernity" in Lebanon.

As much as these matters have been neglected, I wish to make them central to my study. My narrative begins in 1861, soon after Lebanon's civil war had been "resolved" and the warring Maronite and Druze factions were separated in more than one way. In the succeeding decades the economy of the Mountain flourished (temporarily) because peasants, by increasing silk production, made large sums of money satisfying the needs of French industrialists (Chapter 2). Predictably enough, the subsequent trade which developed between Europe and the Mountain strengthened ties between the two regions. Primarily Christian peasants consciously reoriented their sericulture toward supplying Marseilles and Lyons because they saw profit. If they did not understand the long-term repercussions of their decisions, they were quite cognizant of the short-term financial advantages. The Maronite peasantry could have shunned the approaches of European mercantile capitalists. While a set of conditions did

exist to facilitate the incorporation of Christian peasants into the world capitalist market, these do not negate the peasants' agency in the process. Explicitly, the strong links between the Maronite *shuyukh* and clergy on one hand and France on the other, the active and enthusiastic involvement of the Church with the silk trade, and the weakening of the hold of the Maronite *shuyukh* over their peasantry were important contributing factors in this process. But all were riddled with contradictory tendencies. For instance, the Maronite Church and *shuyukh* relationship with France was problematic, and it varied over time from friendly cooperation to outright hostility. And ultimately peasants were not totally obligated to sell to the French; they had some choice in the matter.

Affirming the agency of peasants in a process which linked the Mountain's economy with that of France is but one aspect of my argument. Another is how imperfect that process was. In other words, what Boutros Labaki paints as a seamless and linear trajectory into a "warped" economy was in reality far more of a jagged and interrupted path whose start and end are difficult to localize at one or two historical points.[41] European merchants suffered many financial setbacks in their dealings with local suppliers of silk. Peasants did not become mindless consumers who purchased whatever Europeans sold locally; rather their tastes dictated the success or failure of particular merchandise. And, most notably, peasant men succeeded in eluding the slide from farming into landless laboring through two strategies. Between 1861 and the 1890s, those men who were most in need of cash sent their daughters to work in the proliferating silk factories. In this manner they remained tied to the land—the source of their social identity and status—while securing additional money to ensure the survival of their families. A later strategy came into play after 1890, when the burgeoning population of the Mountain and stagnating silk prices made it increasingly difficult for peasants to make a decent living off the land. At that point the elevated expectations of peasants (and not their poverty) propelled many of them to leave the Mountain and to emigrate to the Americas (Chapter 3). In such a fashion they once again eluded the fate anticipated for them by Dependency theory and returned to form the nucleus of a new middle class. From this perspective, what Labaki characterizes as underdevelopment (the death of the industrial sector) looks more like the result of a successful resistance to the commodification of labor.

Complicating the narrative of these times even further were the historical ripples from women's work in silk factories and emigration. Both events placed unusual strain on the structure and hierarchy of the "family" and

shed harsh and critical light on the contradictions inherent in that patriarchal edifice. When young women's "honor" was sacrificed to safeguard that of their fathers and when men abandoned their families to seek financial refuge beyond the village, the men were in essence reneging on their part of the patriarchal "contract." The assumption that a woman would and should subsume her interests to that of a family led by a father or husband became less defensible when that man was no longer "protecting" her. Unhinged as men were by women's work in silk factories, the "timeless" premises on which the family was founded suffered even further in the *mahjar.* Stretched across thousands of miles, family relations became frayed and threatened to break. Furthermore, these peasants were rudely and suddenly yanked out of their small village world to face a dominant culture that was not particularly hospitable to their traditions and ways of life. Consciously and unconsciously, the emigrants had to explain—and even defend—who they were to the larger society as well to themselves (Chapter 4). Their financial success was dependent on their doing so to some extent. To enter the inner sanctum of American society, for example, was to come closer to the sources of wealth and economic power; but only those who did not appear "different" were allowed in.

Internally and externally this struggle went on and touched almost every aspect of the emigrants' lives. Their clothes, language and accent, food, and social habits became measures of their Otherness. Gender and family, more than anything else perhaps, became the site of contention over their cultural identity. Questions—practical and theoretical—arose about Lebanese women's work outside the home, about raising children, and about whether there should be any difference in the treatment of boys and girls. In public newspaper articles and private conversations emigrants argued over these matters, especially as they found themselves caught in the midst of the artificial construct of "East" and "West." Were they of the "traditional" (read: backward) "East" or of the "modern West"? Were they on the side of science and enlightenment or that of superstitions and ignorance? Ridiculously reductionist as these questions may appear in retrospect, they were nonetheless compelling to many emigrants. Even those who refused to "assimilate" into American society or even accept what they regarded as a ludicrous dichotomy had to actively reject its values and demands. None were spared this onslaught on their sense of self.

This does not mean that the redefinition of individual and collective identities was controlled by the colonizing culture of the "West." Nor does it imply that these questions were inflicted from outside the culture

of the emigrants, even if the language with which these questions were articulated was unprecedented. Rather the encounter with an imperious society only gave greater prominence and immediacy to contradictions that were inherent within the culture of the emigrants. Specifically, there were tensions indigenous to the definition of gender and the relationship between family and clan. In the Mountain, these tensions were camouflaged under "tradition" and smothered by economic and social pressures external to the individual and family. In "Amirka" these mechanisms and ideologies became less effective, and the contradictions more glaringly volatile, particularly as emigrants had to endure benevolent and malevolent critiques of their "traditions" in the name of "modernity."

Such questions were equally significant as they were carried back to the Mountain within the baggage of returning emigrants (Chapter 5). The emigrants' years in the "West" and all the material culture they had accumulated (clocks, clothes, and even a few cars) set them apart from those who had stayed behind in the Mountain. Thus, even as they rejected "America" to return "home," these emigrants were nonetheless changed by their years in the *mahjar*. As Stuart Hall observed, "Migration is a one way trip. There is no 'home' to go back to."[42] By design and inadvertently these differences created a social and cultural gap. Returning emigrants certainly were not interested in plowing the land as much as in owning larger tracts. Although most were illiterate—and perhaps it was because of that—they bought education for their sons and daughters. The old abode was no longer adequate given their sense of material comfort, nor was it an appropriate reflection of their social status. Bigger and more distinct dwellings were erected to announce their success. Even their clothes betrayed their metamorphosis from peasants into something else. Shorter and more expensive dresses, gold watches dangling from suit vests, and make-up signaled a shift in taste toward the "modern."

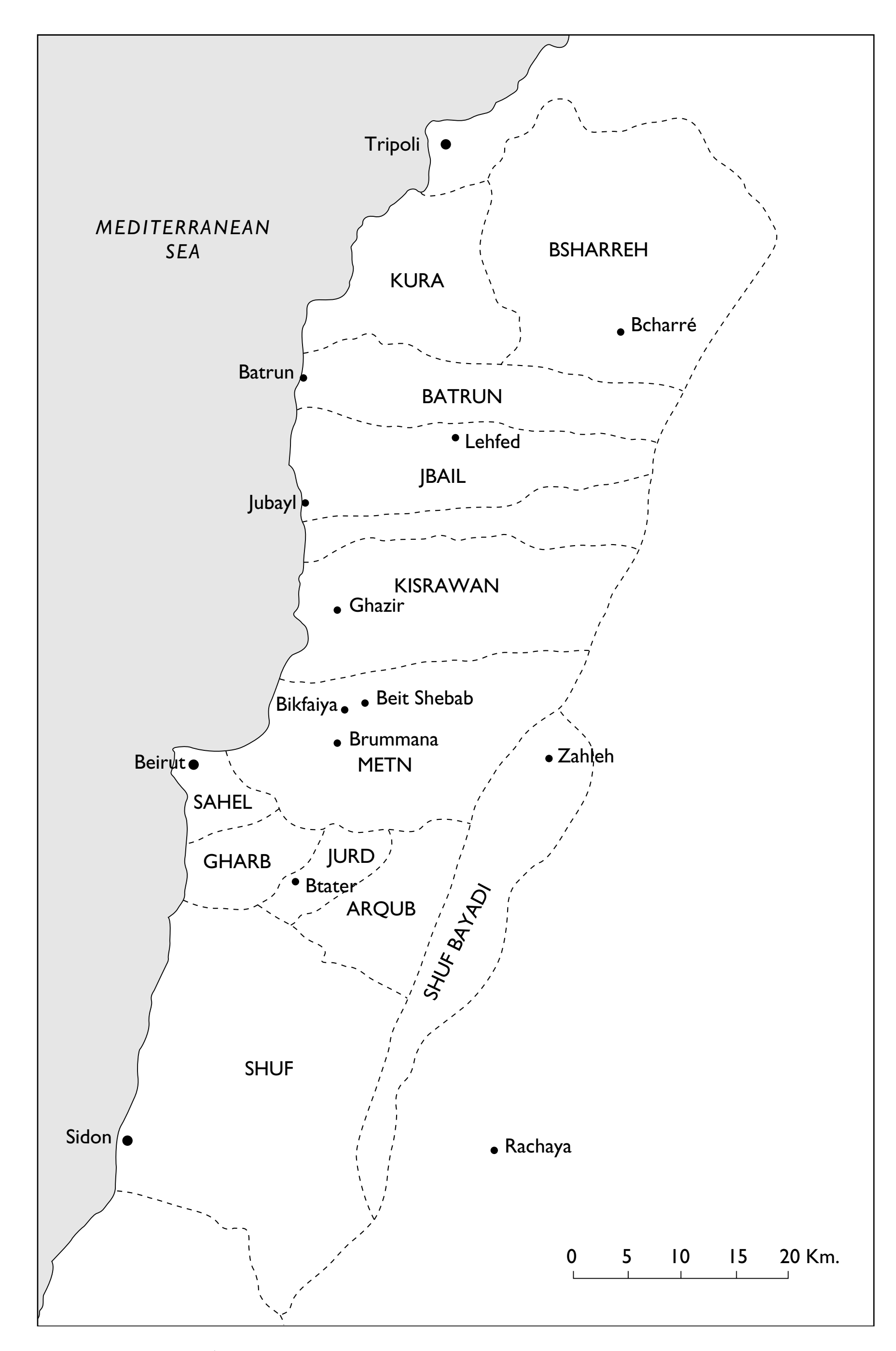
The influx of these emigrants coincided with—and promoted—the emergence of a localized ideology of the "modern" within the new print media of Mount Lebanon. This ideology was being constructed in various arenas of the public life in Lebanon, such as education, political structure, democracy, and even the idea of a "nation." However, the meaning of "modernity" was most vehemently debated as it pertained to gender. Newspapers and magazines dedicated part or all of their pages to subjects such as "modern" mothering and housekeeping, the education of girls, the role of women within Lebanese society, and "modern" marriage. The confluence of these two forces was responsible for the creation of a rural middle class in Lebanon, and the children of this new class became the

urban middle class of the cities in later years. Yet, even as members of this new social group were erecting cultural and economic boundaries that distinguished them from peasants and the urban elite, internal voices attempted to dismantle those edifices (Chapter 6). In particular, feminists—a term that was not used by any of the women authors—questioned the public/private paradigm of "modern" middle-class life. They criticized that division and the imprisonment of women within a cult of domesticity. Their critique was based not only on the greater rights that women in the "West" were enjoying but on a "tradition" of women's labor. Women who would not have described themselves as politically active parlayed their designated roles as "mother" into forays into the public world, where they worked to safeguard the morals of society—a task which they accused men of abandoning. In these and other ways, class formation in the Mountain was fraught with dialectical tensions and was punctuated by twists and turns that made its outcome hardly predictable, let alone fixed.

. . .

Along every step of this road many peasants/emigrants/members of the middle class struggled to define their metamorphosis, and they succeeded at least some of the time. They did not simply duplicate the culture and society of the "West," but they critically evaluated its elements, rejecting many while accepting some on their own terms whenever they could. Ultimately, the kaleidoscopic nature of this history makes rigid theoretical constructs like "modernization" and "Dependency" fall quite short of capturing the humanity of the people involved. And it is these multihued colors that my narrative is meant to display—albeit in a necessarily limited range. In the coming pages I venture to tell that history by following in the footsteps of peasants from the village to the factory, across the oceans and back. I write their stories as integral to the making of a new middle class and to the making of "modern" Lebanon.

Given this purpose, I have tried whenever possible to let the voices of the people who lived those times come through my narrative. Voices of peasants are not easy to discern as they left little in the way of written records. But in the case of emigrants we are more fortunate. In this regard, the Alexa Naff Arab American Collection at the Smithsonian Museum of American History provided me with rich oral histories told by emigrants and also with evocative photographs. Similarly, preserved Arabic newspapers—published in the United States between 1890 and the onset of World War I—allowed me to hear some of the arguments



Map 1. Mount Lebanon, 1870–1921.

and discussions that were part of the lives of emigrants. One must be aware, however, that for the most part these voices were of the emerging emigrant middle class and not of the community as a whole. Regrettably, I have not been privileged to gain similar access to the lives and thoughts of emigrants who went to Brazil and Argentina; those would have certainly enriched this work. My approach to collecting and using all this material has been to mix social, economic, and cultural history in a way that best captures the organic complexity of people's lives. In other words, the method to my theoretical "madness" is to avoid the assumption that any one particular analytical approach will suffice in explaining the web of decisions that make up the history of emigrants and their communities. Moreover, I have focused on the Christian communities in Lebanon for two reasons. First, and primarily, the greatest number of emigrants were drawn from these communities. Second, there is precious little information about the history of the Druze community save for one or two contemporary chronicles. Finally, I would like to note that I am using "Mountain," "Mount Lebanon," and "Lebanon" interchangeably. In all cases I am employing the noun to refer to the historical limits of the Mutasarrifiyya as shown in Map 1. I am not resorting to these terms as a "national" reference to the current geopolitical map of Lebanon. After all, this book is about the construction of that imagined community.

2

Factory Girls

> *You threaten the girls that work in our factories with excommunication because they are not separated enough from the boys, and yet you find yourself incapable of doing anything against one individual who is abusing your name, and marching with an army against the government of your country!!*
> —Bernard des Éssard, French consul general in Beirut, 1866

Thus, in 1866, did the French consul general sarcastically chide two Maronite clergymen about the church's lack of action against the political renegade Yusuf Karam.[1] To his mind, it was rather absurd for the church to worry about as "trivial" a matter as the distance between the bodies of workers in silk factories when there were far more "serious" matters at hand. What he failed—or chose not—to understand was that young women's work in the increasingly numerous silk factories presented a profound threat to the authority of the church over the "morals" of society in Mount Lebanon. Proximity of unrelated young men and women transgressed a central tenet of the gender politics in Mount Lebanon. When it occurred in one or two instances, it was a manageable scandal. But when thousands of women intermingled on a daily basis with strangers, the situation became a crisis of considerable proportions. Moreover, by entering into a new public space—created by steam-belching and foul-smelling factories—women were publicly undertaking atypical economic and societal roles within peasant families. Work in factories, then, not only threatened to create *fitna* (social upheaval) by making room for "uncontrolled"

sexuality, but it also brought into question the very core of gender roles, themselves the cornerstone of patriarchal society.

This was but one of several consequences of the commercialization of sericulture, which came on the heels of sixty years of political turmoil in Mount Lebanon. Silk was also altering the meaning of class. While the society of Mount Lebanon had long been stratified into peasants and *shuyukh,* the boundaries between the two groups were articulated in patrilineal terms rather than financial ones. Put more simply, one was born into, and died within, a "strata."[2] Money could purchase many things, but not social status; and the families on top made certain of that. *Mashayikh* like the Khazins, Abi-Lamᶜas, and Jumblatts were quite jealous of any encroachment on their social privileges and distinctions by the undifferentiated *ahali,* or the peasants.[3] As one local chronicler put it, "In this country there is tremendous preservation of the rank of people according to custom, which does not disappear in poverty and cannot be obtained through wealth."[4] While in reality some families did cross these boundaries, the process took many generations to complete, and thus this limited permeability was hidden underneath the cloak of time. Yet, in the new economic realities of the Mountain, these sacrosanct "traditions" suffered far more rapid transformations that could not be concealed or ignored. Some peasants made fortunes that allowed them to buy honorary titles, and many a *shaykh* suffered humiliating financial crises that crippled his ability to sustain the social rituals necessary for his rank. At the same time that money from silk was wreaking havoc on social divisions, silk factories were infusing "class" with more economic meanings and refined divisions. In this climate, the term *factory girl* came to identify the social and economic measures of a working class and to differentiate it from peasants and elites.

Profits from silk cocoons augmented this new definition of class by raising the material expectations of many peasants in the Mountain. It started with the greater demand by the textile mills of Lyons for silk and the higher prices they were willing to pay for it. Peasants in Lebanon obliged with a dramatic increase in the cultivation of mulberry to feed more and more hungry silkworms. Within this unpredictable market economy there were more possibilities to make fortunes within a relatively short period of time—as well as to become destitute. As one commentator wrote, "The inhabitants [of Mount Lebanon] live in ease or misery depending on whether the harvest [of silk cocoons] was good or bad."[5] Good years meant more money to purchase goods (like coffee, rice, and sugar) that peasants rarely had before and that only the *shuyukh*

were previously privileged to enjoy. While this was hardly unbridled consumerism, it still went beyond matters of survival to a quest for some modicum of luxury. Through this cycle peasants stepped further into the market economy, added more debts, and became more vulnerable to the changing fortunes of the silk market. And when it began to falter, the repercussions were large for a majority of peasants who had grown accustomed to a better life. Most prominent of these repercussions—as we will see in the next chapter—was emigration

Silk—or more accurately the interaction between the local peasant economy and European capitalism—was instrumental in unleashing a momentum for change that altered the meaning and form of gender, class, and the good life in Mount Lebanon. It is my aim in this chapter to make clear the nature and magnitude of these historical processes. I do so because these ruptures in the societal fabric of Mount Lebanon were critical factors in the history of emigration and in the making of the middle class.

Silk

To truly appreciate these transformations we need to look at the changing role of silk in the economy and lives of peasants.[6] Sericulture, or the raising of silkworms, had been a steady part of the Mountain's economy for many centuries. Yet, while the role it played was important, it was not overwhelmingly critical. A look at the finances of one peasant family—as reported by David Urquhart, a European sojourner—will help clarify this point. He noted that "their resources are, two hundred mulberry trees, which produce silk worth 500 piasters; and a vineyard of two hundred vine-stocks, which gives as much more. They make up the rest by labor in the fields, . . . [which] gives 800 piasters."[7] Of the total 1,800 piasters that this family needed every year to survive, then, silk provided little over a quarter. This was not an isolated case by any means. Looking at the larger picture across the Mountain, we find that in the late 1790s silk provided only about 13.3 percent of the overall taxes, while olives, wheat, and grapes were providing more than that percentage.[8] In the 1840s these numbers had changed only slightly. Finally, we can evaluate this relative importance of silk by comparing the size of the land that mulberry trees occupied as opposed to wheat, olive, and grapevines. As late as the 1840s, this land did not exceed 10 percent of the total planted acreage in the Mountain, while wheat covered close to one

third of the *jlal* (terraces) of the Mountain, and grapevines followed closely behind.[9]

After 1860 these numbers changed quite rapidly. Instead of the three million mulberry trees that were feeding silkworms in the 1840s, Mount Lebanon had—by World War I—twenty-eight million such trees planted, with an additional nine million in the *vilayat* (administrative district) of Beirut.[10] In other words, the number of mulberry trees increased more than tenfold in the span of seventy years, while for centuries before the increase had been gradual and slow. More significant than the number of trees is the actual area that they occupied within the Mountain. The percentage of land that these trees took up increased from about 10 percent to more than 40 percent during the same seventy-year period.[11] The augmentation of land dedicated to mulberry trees translated into a similar increase in the production of silk cocoons. While in 1861 the *ahali* of the Mountain raised 960,000 kilograms of cocoons, by 1890 they had pushed that number to 4.64 million kilograms; nearly a fivefold increase in just three decades.[12]

With mulberry trees covering so much of the arable land during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, silk naturally came to play a dominant role in the agricultural economy of Mount Lebanon. Financial figures relating to the sale of silk thread and cocoons confirm its rising importance. Between 1836 and 1857 silk's share in the exports from Beirut hovered around 22 percent but never exceeded 36 percent of the total goods shipped out of that port. Even as late as 1857, silk accounted for less than 25 percent of the total 40 million French francs worth of exported material.[13] This share began to change soon after the 1860 civil war, which opened the Lebanese economic doors wider to European capitalists. In 1873, for instance, silk accounted for 275 million of the 335 million piasters worth of exported goods, or 82.5 percent of the total exports.[14] Thereafter, sericulture continued to occupy a position of primacy in the export trade of Mount Lebanon; even in 1911, when sericulture was in decline, silk provided 62 percent of the exports of Mount Lebanon.[15] In the 1880s silk came to supply over 50 percent of the total revenues of the Mountain, whereas only thirty years before it was giving a mere portion of that percentage. In short, silk went from being a supplemental product that helped support a peasant family to being an essential cash crop on which Lebanese peasants depended for their survival.

This dramatic increase in the cultivation of mulberry trees and silkworms was generated by an intersection of French and indigenous economic interests. In turn, these interests were facilitated by the political

upheavals that rocked Mount Lebanon for the first sixty years of the nineteenth century. To understand this period and its effects on Mount Lebanon, we now turn to a brief exploration of the political history of the Mountain in the years preceding 1861.

Until the late 1850s political life in Mount Lebanon was made up of four spheres. The first was that of the *amir*, who ruled the Mountain at times nominally and at other times more effectively, and whose main concern was to keep the *shuyukh* under his control, as well as to keep regional Ottoman rulers content and at bay. On the second level, were the *muqata*ʿ*ji*s, or the *shuyukh,* who controlled areas that varied from one village to entire districts and whose main task was to collect the taxes from the peasants in their area, supply the *amir* with militia on demand, and keep the local peace. The third sphere was the Maronite church, which until the 1840s was at the periphery of political life, but it gained influence and power from that time and occupied a central role in the Mountain's politics throughout the rest of the nineteenth century. Finally, there was the clan, which was much more present in the daily lives of the peasants and in more varied ways than any other political element. A set of rights and responsibilities which defined the patron-client relationship did exist between fellah and *shaykh.* Yet, for the most part, the *shaykh*'s responsibilities were in effect limited to protecting the peasantry from foreign incursions; a task at which they were rarely successful. More accurately, the relationship among these four spheres was conducted mainly in the areas of taxation and recruitment for war, and the fellah was constantly trying to safeguard his crops and life from the ever-increasing demands of the *shuyukh.* Ultimately, under the system of the *imara* (rule by an *amir*), there was little that the peasant could do to hold either the *amir* or the *shaykh* accountable for his actions. Refusal to pay the exorbitant taxes brought military violence against the peasants. Migration to other areas within the Mountain was not feasible in most cases because the *shuyukh,* for all of their contention, tried to present a unified front against the peasantry and refused to allow any fugitive peasant to settle in their areas. Escaping to areas outside the Mountain was hardly attractive to a peasant, especially a Christian escaping taxation, since conditions of the peasantry in areas like Syria were generally much worse than they were at home in the Mountain.[16]

The wide gap which existed between these political spheres made it easy for external political powers to exert their influence on the Mountain and to manipulate the local rivalries. From Ahmad Pasha al-Jazzar to the French and English consuls in Beirut, the level of interference in the

Mountain's internal affairs was at times astounding. For example, in exchange for his support, or even lack of opposition, al-Jazzar extracted hundreds of thousands of piasters from Amir Bashir al-Thani as well as from his rivals for the position of *amir.* The French consul, being the representative of the French king, the "protector" of the Mountain's Catholics, regularly received religious and secular delegates from the Maronite community who "consulted" with him about political matters from the selection of a new patriarch of the church to the appointment of a new *shaykh.*[17] The only saving grace in this whole situation was the diffused aspect of political life and the abundance of players. Such a situation allowed the internal political actors of Mount Lebanon to manipulate outside forces by pitting them against each other in the struggle to gain the upper political hand. This was a rather negative way of conducting politics, but it did provide for some semblance of control on the part of the *amir* and the *shuyukh* as well as the peasants. Thus, Amir Bashir al-Shihabi appealed to Muhammad ᶜAli, the ruler of Egypt, to intercede for him with the Ottoman powers to ensure his return to grace, and in return he promised allegiance to the Egyptian ruler in his struggle for dominance over Syria. The Maronite church constantly appealed for the support of Europe's governments and, failing that, for the support of Catholics against supposed persecutions and threats by the Muslim powers and population.[18] As with the economic situation, the multiplicity and diffusion of political powers was a source of both weakness and strength for the occupants of Mount Lebanon.

This balance was delicately perched on the notion that change within the system would be gradual and measured. But, by the first decade of the 1800s, and in particular after the end of the Egyptian occupation in 1841, this poise was badly disturbed. Before the Egyptians entered the Mountain in 1831, Amir Bashir's centralizing efforts and political maneuvering had created immense financial pressure on the peasantry. Payments to al-Jazzar and to subsequent pashas of Acre and Damascus forced Bashir to collect exorbitant taxes three and even four times a year from the only producing class in the Mountain: the peasantry.[19] Bad crop years, unusually extreme weather, and a ballooning of the number of mouths that each peasant family had to feed made life almost unbearable for many peasants.[20] Ultimately, the un-"customary" behavior[21] on the part of the *amir,* and the financial hardships that it engendered, pushed popular sentiment beyond grumbling to the extraordinary point of open revolt.[22] The popular displays of resentment against the ineptitude and oppressiveness of the local elites became bolder in language and goals as the eco-

nomic situation worsened. Starting with limited and deferential complaints about unusually onerous taxation, peasants progressively increased the scope of their criticisms to encompass the *iqta*ᶜ system itself and not just its failures or excesses. Thus, between 1782 and 1858 there were at least seven major peasant revolts that derived from refusal to pay the demanded taxes.[23] The most notable of these was the Kisrawan revolt of 1858.[24]

Within two years this *ᶜammiyat* (popular uprising) had turned into a civil war that claimed the lives of thousands of peasants and pitted Druze against Maronite in the Mountain. At the conclusion of this communal violence, the Christians were rather badly beaten, with many of their towns and villages sacked and burned by the Druze. The Ottomans, with little if any immediate military presence, stood by and in some cases—as with the town of Marjᶜuyun—assisted in the massacres. While losing badly, the Christians still managed to perpetrate many horrible acts of violence against the Druze in the smaller villages of the Shūf district of the Mountain. The Europeans, and in particular the French, alarmed at the defeat of the Christians, rushed in with troops and with threats of intervention if the Ottoman government did not put a stop to the events. When the shooting finally ended in 1861, Mount Lebanon was a transformed place. Many Maronites had escaped to Beirut and Kisrawan from the Druze-dominated areas in the Shūf. Foreign forces were in Lebanon, and the Ottomans were busy chasing those of the Druze who were designated as culprits. Some of the Druze leaders were put in prison, while many more fled to the Hawran region in Syria to escape capture. Soon after, diplomatic negotiations regarding Lebanon's political future commenced between the European powers (Britain, France, Austria, Russia) and the Ottoman Porte.

Having always intervened in the internal affairs of Mount Lebanon, the European powers—as represented by their consuls general—saw the 1860 war, to varying degrees, as a rather convenient pretext for furthering their interests in that country—and by extension in the Ottoman Empire. Ultimately, the intense negotiations between the external powers and the lobbying of the internal political leaders led to the creation of a new political entity called the *Mutasarrifiyya* under a treaty that came to be known as the *Règlement* of 1861. In its totality, the Règlement exposed Lebanon to a much greater degree of European interventions, whether on the political or—more relevantly for this narrative—on the economic level. Sixty years of political turmoil cleared the path between "Europe"—through its local representatives—and the peasants of many intermediaries. Most notable among those were the *shuyukh* of the Mountain. This

development led to the next step in the incorporation of Mount Lebanon into the world capitalist system and to a convergence between a local crop and a European need.

Increased weaving of silk textiles in France in the nineteenth century required more silk thread than could be supplied by European sericulture. This was especially the case after 1865, when a blight decimated French and Italian sericulture; industrialists of Lyons and Marseilles needed to find alternative supplies for their factories. The presence of European silk-spinning factories in Mount Lebanon, regular and inexpensive steamboat service between Beirut and Marseilles, diminution of tariffs and customs on exported silk thread, and the rise of French political prominence in Lebanese internal affairs after 1861 convinced these industrialists to choose Mount Lebanon as one source of silk. For the peasantry, increasing production of silk and selling it to the French made economic sense. While in the 1840s the price of one *oka* (1.228 kilograms) hovered around 12 piasters, by 1857 French merchants were paying 45 piasters per *oka,* and those prices persisted with minor changes through the 1870s. On another level, cultivation of mulberry trees was the most feasible way by which individual peasant families could increase their landholdings. Landlords intent on increasing their profits from sericulture needed peasant labor to terrace and plant *mawat* (literally, "dead") lands. In exchange for their five- to seven-year labor investment, peasants would acquire one quarter of the new *jlal* of land through *mugharassa* contracts.[25]

While French need for cocoons occasioned the proliferation of mulberry trees and sericulture, French demand for silk thread encouraged the industrialization of silk spinning in Mount Lebanon. Before 1838, silk spinning in the Mountain was carried out by *hilali*s (itinerant spinners), who used a hand-powered spinning wheel which the French called *roue arabe.* However, French silk factories required a stronger and more evenly spun silk thread than could be obtained using these traditional methods. This convinced some European entrepreneurs, bent on profiting from satisfying the requirements of French industrialists, to establish silk factories in Mount Lebanon.

The first viable "modern" silk factory was opened in 1838 by Nicolas, Joseph, and Antoine-Fortuné Portalis—three French *commerçants* who had been living and working in Alexandria.[26] They located their filature in the village of Btater in the Jurd region of the Mountain. Their choice of that site was ideal in many ways. While close to the Beirut-Damascus route, the village was distant enough from the Muslim cities to allow a European Christian to buy plots of land without exciting too many sen-

sitivities. Furthermore, the area was within easy reach of the Metn and Kisrawan districts, where silk raising was most common, and transport of cocoons would thus be low in cost. Water, a necessary ingredient for dissolving the glue off the cocoons, was more abundant than in other areas of Mount Lebanon. Pinewood, needed for heating purposes, was also to be found in greater supply than in the denuded highlands of Kisrawan and Bsherri.[27] Perhaps most crucially, Btater and the surrounding villages were populated mostly by Christian peasants, who were more likely (because of a history of relations between the Christians of Lebanon and France) than their Muslim or Druze counterparts to accept employment from co-religionist Europeans.

Within the span of two years the Portalis enterprise had captured almost a 5 percent share of the spinning business in the Mountain.[28] For one factory to garner this much of the silk production in a matter of two years signaled its success as well as its strong capital base. Perhaps a greater measure of its success was the number of European imitators who followed its lead. In 1846, an Englishman by the name of Scott opened another factory in Shimlan in cooperation with Amir Muhammad Arslan, the *muqataᶜji* of the area.[29] By 1851 the number of European filatures had increased by six. A French merchant, André de Figon, established two factories: one in Ghazir, Kisrawan, and another in al-Qrayyé in the Metn district. Another entrepreneur, with an inflated sense of self-importance that led him to change his name from Thomas Dalgue-Mourgue to Mourgue d'Algue, established a fairly sizable factory in ᶜAyn Hamadé. Some Lyonnaise silk manufacturers followed suit and set up factories in al-Qrayyé and Hammana.[30]

This sudden rush by French capitalists and merchants resulted from the success of the Portalis experiment in manufacturing medium- to high-quality silk thread at low costs. Profits from such an enterprise were obviously higher in an area where wage labor was much cheaper than in Europe. In 1851 a male Lebanese worker was paid 4 to 5 piasters for a day's work, while women were paid only 1 piaster for the same amount of work. In comparison, French men working in a silk factories in the Midi received almost 8.8 piasters each workday and French women spinners received 4 piasters.[31] Furthermore, silk-factory laborers in Mount Lebanon worked longer hours than their French counterparts. An average working day in Mount Lebanon was 11.5 hours as opposed to 10.4 hours in France.[32] In effect, then, male workers in Mount Lebanon received 40 percent of the daily wages paid to Frenchmen working in a Lyonnaise silk factory, and Lebanese peasant women received barely 22

percent of the daily wages of Frenchwomen. As twelve thousand of the fourteen thousand workers in filatures based in Mount Lebanon were women, French industrialists were, by the 1880s, saving almost 8 million francs annually by importing silk from the Mountain.[33]

Besides allowing savings in wages, labor in Mount Lebanon was attractive to French industrialists and capitalists specifically because of its rural roots. By the 1840s, the French silk industry had had four centuries of history; its labor force was quite vocal in protecting its traditional rights and demanding new ones. In 1744 and 1786 workers in the silk factories went on strike against the new tariffs on labor costs and wages.[34] Organized strikes also broke out in 1853, 1863, and 1867 in the Stéphanoise region, where more than forty thousand workers were employed in one of the three branches of the silk industry. After 1869, the strikes became much more organized and acquired the characteristics of urban union movements for better wages, fewer hours, and better conditions.[35] In contrast, the Lebanese young women who were employed in the silk factories of Mount Lebanon came from patriarchal homes and were theoretically much less inclined to challenge male hierarchical authority. No history of guild participation or union organization prepared these peasant women, or men for that matter, to challenge wages, working hours, or conditions. And French entrepreneurs were quite eager to safeguard this "pristine" state of the indigenous labor force. Portalis, for instance, was quick to dismiss four French women reelers from their jobs as instructors to the local women workers in Btater on the grounds that they were disseminating "subversive ideas."[36]

The low cost of labor and material also made it quite inexpensive for the French capitalists to build their silk factories in the Mountain. The structures themselves were rather simple in design: a long rectangular space built of the local ubiquitous stone and roofed the traditional way with timber logs packed with dirt. Each of the basins where the cocoons were dipped to dissolve their glue cost about 1,000 piasters.[37] Generally, the European factories contained at least eighty of these basins, which meant an initial investment of 80,000 piasters. Other operating costs, such as salaries, the purchase of wood for fuel, and transportation expenses, added another 30,000 to 40,000 piasters each year. Depending on the size of the factory, the European owner had to provide anywhere between 200,000 and 300,000 piasters for the purchase of silk. The total operating cost for a typical European silk factory in Mount Lebanon varied between 310,000 and 420,000 piasters; in years consequent to its establishment, the cost of basins would obviously be deducted from this

annual cost. In French francs, the capital outlay did not exceed the 100,000 mark, which was quite modest when compared with the millions of francs invested in the construction of factories in Lyons.[38]

Transportation of silk from Mount Lebanon became much more economical with the introduction of steamboat service to the port of Beirut around the middle of the 1830s. Sailboats gave way to the *paquebots* that reduced travel time between Beirut and Marseilles from three months to two weeks. In 1835 the English were the first to establish regular steamliner service between Liverpool and Mediterranean ports, including that of Beirut. The French soon followed suit with *paquebots* connecting Marseilles to Constantinople and Alexandria, with calls at the port of Beirut. In 1841 a law was passed by the French parliament allocating almost 5,923,500 francs to the construction of six steamboats specifically for the Marseilles-Alexandria line, which passed by Beirut; by 1845 these boats were in full operation.[39] By 1856 three French companies, two English ones, a Belgian, and a Sardinian planned to open new steamboat lines between Beirut and European ports. And by the 1860s steamboats were ferrying 70 percent of the four hundred thousand tons of shipments coming into and going out of Beirut.[40]

As the number and size of boats arriving in Beirut increased, the cost of shipping decreased proportionately. Austrian steamboats reduced the freight cost by about 25 percent in the few years after they started operating between Trieste and Alexandria. Competition for business among the English, French, and Austrians drove the cost per kilogram even further down. In 1854, the transportation of a bale of silk weighing one hundred kilograms from the filature in the Mountain to the factory in Lyon added 370 piasters, or 1.7 percent, to the value of that package. As a result, the kilogram of silk arrived at the weaving factory in France costing no more than 232.5 piasters, or 52.8 French francs; quite a bargain considering that the cost of one kilogram of French spun silk was at least 57 francs and was often quite a bit more.[41] By 1883 the freight cost of one hundred kilograms of goods varied between 0.8 and 2 francs depending on the material, while the overland transportation costs to Damascus were considerably higher—7.3 francs for every hundred kilograms.[42] Equally significant was the time factor in shipping silk. Before the middle of the 1830s, shipments arrived at the silk manufactories of Damascus at least two months before they entered any European factories. With the introduction of steamboat service to the port of Beirut, large shipments of silk to Marseilles arrived only a day or two later than much smaller shipments that had entered the gates of Damascus. Thus, in only three

decades, Mount Lebanon was brought physically much closer to Europe than it had ever been.

Another change was that the rise in European influence over Ottoman economic policies afforded the French capitalists greater security for their investments. The erasure of Ottoman government monopolies in 1838—under pressure from European powers—and consequent grants of commercial privileges to European merchants advantaged these merchants at the expense of their local counterparts. For example, while before the 1840s the Europeans were forced to pay the same tariffs as the indigenous merchants; by 1850 they were paying only 10 percent of the cost of exported silk as opposed to the 15, 30, and even 47 percent which the local merchants had to pay.[43] After clearing the Egyptian forces out of Syria and Mount Lebanon, the Europeans gained even greater clout with the Ottoman Porte. The French consul general in Beirut could send letters to the Ottoman Porte demanding that one local official or another be restrained from "bothering" European merchants. By 1861, when the European powers had forced a political resolution of the 1860 civil war in the Mountain, French, English, and Russian consuls general had a direct say in who was appointed to govern the Mountain and were strong points of reference for the quibbling indigenous political factions. In fact, Article X of the European Règlement went so far as to place "all commercial litigation in the Mountain under the jurisdiction of the Ottoman Commercial Tribunal in Beirut,"[44] which, although presided over by a Muslim, was made up mostly of European merchants or Levantine traders closely tied to European commercial interests.[45] Predictably, these tribunals always judged in favor of the mercantile community and applied effective pressure on local authorities to reduce tariffs and customs duties. Control over the economy of Mount Lebanon was thus brought under even greater overt European influence.

All these factors made Mount Lebanon an increasingly attractive area for investment of European—but mainly French—capital, as was solidly manifested in the ten silk factories owned by Europeans. It was also displayed in a growing number of establishments that were financed by French merchants but managed and "owned" by Lebanese entrepreneurs.[46] This arrangement derived from the desire—on the part of some Lebanese—to make money reeling silk and from the great cost associated with starting a filature for that purpose. This steep cost was prohibitive for most Lebanese even though most of the Lebanese-owned factories were modest structures of seventy to eighty square meters with fifty basins for immersing silk cocoons.[47] For this reason they turned to the indus-

trialists of Lyon for loans to help start their establishments. By 1910 the French were advancing about 8 million francs per year to the owners of filatures in Mount Lebanon; a sum that was equivalent to slightly more than one third of the silk that these same merchants bought in the Mountain.[48] In return, these *négociants* received interest of 4 to 5 percent on their loans and, more important, guaranteed themselves yearly supplies of silk thread. Through this arrangement, Lebanese-"owned" silk factories soon outnumbered those directly managed and owned by Europeans. By 1862 there were 33 Lebanese filatures alongside the European ones.[49] Twenty-three years later, the number increased to 101, and by 1893 there were 149 Lebanese silk factories in Mount Lebanon.[50]

These numbers are pertinent to our story because every single factory employed young women to reel the silk cocoons. As new factories were built more young women left their homes and entered a workspace unlike any they had experienced before.

Gender

Regardless of who owned the factories, they all required workers to transform cocoons into an exportable silk thread. Peasants presented the only readily available pool of labor in the area. The task of the factory owner was to transform them from farmers accustomed to working according to "peasant time" to industrial laborers whose schedule was dictated by a clock linked to the exigencies of European markets.[51] Until 1850 men were exclusively employed in the European-owned factories, but within eight years the formula was reversed and women constituted by far the majority of workers. The reason for this shift was ostensibly that "the young girls have . . . such patience at the same time as cleverness."[52] More to the point, male peasants proved most unable to meet the needs of these factory owners. Men, whose identity and honor were tightly linked to tilling a plot of land, were hesitant to be seen in a factory. This attitude severely limited the supply of male labor available to factory owners.[53] Only those few who did not own even a small piece of land accepted factory work, and they did so reluctantly.[54] Yet even they were uncooperative in following the dictates of a foreman as well as an artificial work schedule, and they generally voted against becoming proletarian by staying home. In fact, many European factory owners complained to the French consul general that after they trained some peasants in the skills necessary for

industrial work and provided them with cash advances for their seasonal labor, the peasants would disappear into the Mountains.[55] By 1858, these difficulties made factory owners look to women for their supply of labor.

Women in Mt. Lebanon had much to recommend them to factory owners. Because of the prevalent hierarchical division of labor that undervalued female work, women could be paid less, and they worked harder. In 1851 a male worker was usually paid 4 to 5 piasters per day, as opposed to the 1 piaster that a female worker earned.[56] Moreover, the social structure of power which placed women beneath men fit well into the pyramidal division of labor in silk factories, with male owners and foremen on the one hand and women workers on the other.[57] The transfer of the gendered division of labor from village to factory was facilitated in several ways. For European owners of factories, recruitment of women proved difficult at first because of the social taboos against contact with strange men. But in the early 1860s the owners circumvented this problem by recruiting young girls from European-run orphanages. In place of their parents, the European factory owner could incorporate these young orphans into a paternalistic institution where he became a surrogate patriarch. However, in some Lebanese-owned factories this transfer was made easier because they started out operation as family enterprises both in capital and labor.[58] Many of the women who were first employed to spin the silk threads were relatives of the owner of the factory.[59] In this manner, the owner extended his patriarchal control over his female relatives from the house into the factory.

Even when local factory owners began recruiting their labor from outside the clan, the patriarchal division of labor within the factory persisted.[60] Employing a predominantly female work force deflected some of the criticism leveled by the Maronite church against mixing of the sexes on the factory floor. As we noted earlier, the church and Maronite elite had, as early as 1866, complained vociferously to the French consul about the practice of employing both men and women to work side by side in silk factories owned by French industrialists. While the practice continued, Maronite factory owners were reluctant to incur the anger of their powerful church and for that reason preferred to hire women almost exclusively with few male overseers.[61] Additionally, factory owners thought young women less likely to dispute wages or to organize protests against the terrible working conditions in the factory because of the transplanted patriarchal structure. Thus, by the early 1880s, twelve thousand unmarried women and girls were working in factories outside their villages, as opposed to a mere one thousand men, who were employed exclusively

as overseers. This number represented 23 percent of the total population of women of working age; on average, one out of every five families had a daughter working in these factories.[62]

If it is clear why factory owners preferred to hire women, the question remains why peasant families who ostensibly considered their honor sacrosanct allowed their young women to work in these silk factories. The answer is twofold: money was needed, and honor was malleable. For the most destitute peasant families, factory work provided an essential source of income. In the 1860s, when a poor peasant family earned no more than 950 piasters per year, a young woman's additional wage of 275 piasters was more than welcome.[63]

While survival pushed the poorest peasants toward new means of acquiring cash, concepts of honor and shame do not seem to have stopped these men from sending their daughters to the silk factories. Honor was never a static or monolithic idea that cut equally across class lines. Rather, as John Davis successfully argues, "honor is a system of stratification."[64] Wealth and status endow their owners with virtue and honor, while the poor have to contend with whatever is allotted them by their equals and superiors. In practice, a man of superior honor—that is, a landowner or a *shaykh*—could insult a peasant of lesser honor with relative impunity, while between equals such an insult could lead to bloodshed.[65] It follows that the higher the social position of a family or lineage, the more visible was its honor, and the more crucial it was for its male members to safeguard both its honor and patrimony. Hence, among the *shuyukh* of Mount Lebanon—Christian or Druze—women were much more cloistered than they were among the poorer peasant families, whose women had to work in the fields and walk to the *ʿayn* (water source) exposed to the eyes of strangers.[66] In sexual terms—which is what honor is most closely associated with—an extramarital relationship between a couple from the *shuyukh* class could lead to bloodletting and long-lasting feuds, while poorer fathers had to force the man to marry the daughter or, if that failed, accept cash compensation.[67] Finally, any shame that was associated with women's work in factories was counteracted by the fact that income from that work allowed men to continue their "honorable" work in the fields. In other words, the poorest male peasants sacrificed their daughters' reputation in order to retain their social identity as peasants, from which they derived their immediate and individual honor, which they conflated with that of the family.

Although these factors made women's work in the factories economically indispensable, socially that work had repercussions. One of the

consequences of sending women to work in the silk factories was immense social pressure on the families involved. The shame that was imposed on these young women became part of the peasant culture to the point where a father or mother who wanted to scold a daughter would say, "Are you going to behave like a factory girl?"[68] Reproachful, and even spiteful, village gossip about purported indecent behavior among the *ʿamila* (female worker) tarnished the honor of the peasant family. Such sanctions were a reflection of the perceived threat that women's work in these factories posed to the existent social structure and mores rather than signs of concern for the welfare of the families involved. This threat was serious enough for the Maronite church to try to prohibit women from working in the silk factories by circulating an ecclesiastical letter which described factory work as immoral for women.[69] When that proved ineffective, the church resorted to pleading with the French ambassador in 1867 to pressure the French owners of these factories to abstain from hiring women.[70] Nor was the outcry only ecclesiastical, for some wealthier peasants and many more *shuyukh* petitioned the Maronite patriarch and government to put an end to women's employment in the factories. One of the many petitions proclaimed that "the honor of the Mountain was being trampled" through the work of these "girls."[71] These dramatic words are a clear indication that women's work in the factories had unleashed a crisis in patriarchy. By trespassing into the "male" sphere and threatening to undermine the idealized gender roles, these "girls" were not only "dishonoring" their particular families but bringing about social chaos.

From the point of view of the "factory girls," work outside the house brought a dissonant combination of economic and social gains and setbacks. For the first time in their lives these young women were earning cash for their work. Previously, their work in the fields and at home was never directly remunerated, and the crops harvested were the property of the family as a whole and not that of a single individual. In contrast, their work in the factories became individually distinguishable, and its cash worth was clearly defined. This transformation certainly did not separate these women's interests from those of their families. Rather, women's work was part of an overall familial strategy which was meant to ensure the survival of that collectivity in changing social and economic circumstances. Still, because money was fast becoming the nexus of society, the earnings of a "factory girl" translated into buying and—to a smaller extent—social power. In the process, these women gained a greater sense of their individual self-worth and abilities through their work.

One example of this new awareness is to be found inside the factories. Between 1860 and 1880, some of the women who worked in the silk factories were hired through male intermediaries, and others were employed through family connections.[72] Men negotiated all wages and terms of work. At times they even pulled the women out of the factory when not satisfied with what they got from the factory owner. This setup was in effect another form of patriarchal control that competed with that which the factory sought to impose on the women. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, however, factory owners, seeking to "rationalize" women's work and avoid competition over its control, began hiring women directly. Direct hiring was possible because of the increased availability of trained women silk workers and the desire of these women to negotiate their own contracts. Without the patriarchal buffer of an intermediary, these women had to struggle, directly and constantly, as workers with employers who were trying to extract more labor. Similarly, the *ʿamilat* (plural of *ʿamila*) tried to use the limited skilled labor pool to their advantage in negotiating salaries.[73] For instance, some women, after promising to work for one factory owner, would at the last minute threaten to go over to a competitor's factory if the wages weren't raised.[74] In one such instance, a French factory owner—de Figon—wrote a letter to his consul in Beirut complaining that "Scott—an English factory owner in the Matn region—took away all of my [women] workers by paying them 4 piasters per day," instead of the 3 that de Figon was paying. An attempt was made to counteract this tactic by establishing a system of contracts and cash advances which committed indebted workers to a certain factory. But in areas where collecting debts was troublesome, at best, for anyone, let alone a Frenchman, these tactics were of limited success. Slowing down the pace of work and producing lower quality silk were also common tactics used by workers to protest low wages.[75]

Ultimately, by the 1890s the *ʿamilat* were resorting to strikes as a way to claim control over their labor. Ducousso claims that the increase in strikes during these times was due to "emigrants returning from the American republics where questions of labor result in frequent conflicts, or to vagrant Europeans who travel throughout Syria fomenting such ideas."[76] However, such claims are spurious. First, by the late 1890s there were few returned emigrants. Those who had come back by then had worked mostly as itinerant workers and not as factory laborers, and their exposure to labor politics was minimal at best. Second, "vagrant Europeans" were not exactly commonplace in the Lebanese mountains, and the few who may have meandered that far off the beaten track are not

likely to have been accepted as leaders to whom peasants would listen. It is far more likely that after two generations of women working in the factories, a consciousness of their self-worth and their exploitation had developed. This clearly was the case in a 1907 women's strike at a French tobacco factory. When the owners refused to provide its women workers with paid vacations, they went on a strike. After a week they won all their demands, which included twenty days of paid vacation and fourteen months of pay per year—the extra two being considered bonus.[77]

Silk factories, then, provided an arena where the young working women could challenge patriarchal/capitalist authority—outside their family—without fearing extreme social reprimands. Gains achieved in a new public sphere did not guarantee a parallel success at home. However, these improvements served to highlight the difference between women's control in the factory and their relative powerlessness within the family. By the end of the nineteenth century, this obvious discrepancy pushed some factory women to try to gain more. This time it was a matter of deciding how to use their wages. Initially, when young women started working in the silk factories, they gave most of their wages to their parents, who decided what to do with it. But by the 1890s many women were keeping most of those wages to themselves. One contemporary proverb lamented how "all that the brunette makes [in silk factories] she spends on lipstick and make-up." [78] Other evidence also points to the fact that the *ʿamilat* were increasingly using their incomes to purchase gold and other precious items for their dowry.[79]

Certainly, before the time of wage-earning, young women did have a trousseau, but it was made up of home-woven items made from leftover silk threads. Such a situation required little in the way of decision making; the leftover silk could be used to make clothes and little else. However, with money, the decision became more complicated because of increased buying power and social prestige. One can argue that "factory girls" were allowed to keep their money for themselves only because it was a way to increase their chances of marriage. At a time when available single men were becoming scarce because of emigration to the Americas, such a tactic socially and economically fit the need of the family as a whole to marry off the young women. But even under such circumstances young women were in essence laying claim to their wages and their labor. In other words, they had acquired the power of independent and individualized decision making, something they had not enjoyed before.

Yet, the women did not necessarily view factory work as liberating. Along with the wages they earned came physical hardships and social problems. Being crowded into a small area with little light, less ventilation, and pots of boiling water was not healthy. According to Ducousso, what Dr. Louis Villermé noted about French women workers in France around 1825 could have easily been a description of the lot of Lebanese women spinners in the late nineteenth century.[80] In a report, Dr. Villermé wrote, "It is difficult to give [a complete] picture of the miserable aspects of the lives of women employed in spinning silk, of the horrible deformations of their hands, of the bad state of health amongst many of them, and of the repulsive odors which attach to their clothes, infect the workshop and strike all those who approach it."[81]Nor was the pace of the work enjoyable. Although hard work was nothing new to these women, variety and social interaction were part of traditional daily work. In silk factories work was the monotonous repetition of spinning silk threads from sunrise to sunset, or anywhere from ten to twelve hours daily. On average seventy to eighty women were crammed into an area no bigger than two hundred square feet with a six-foot ceiling, and they worked around fifty basins belching hot steam around the clock. The spinning machines made far too much noise to permit conversation. The only breaks in the monotony were a half-hour break for lunch and two shorter breaks during the morning and afternoon. Few women could have felt this work to be liberating. In fact, many *ʿamilat* registered their dissatisfaction with "a good deal of indolence and very little interest [in their work]," according to Ducousso. The same European observer of this "sorry state of affairs" went on to recommend instituting a system of penalties and rewards and "tight surveillance" to "*make them* produce silk of good quality."[82]

Socially, the *ʿamilat* felt the disapproving pressure in stares when they went to work or when they walked to the village's water source. The stigma which came to be attached to the work and life of the *ʿamilat* not only was burdensome but also threatened their chances of marriage. "Tainted" as they were by contact with male strangers and relegated to an inferior class within peasant society, some young women saw their chances for marriage diminish. These chances were further reduced because parents, who were loathe to lose their daughters' crucial wages, kept them in the silk factories long past the prime years of "marriageability" for women, which was between the ages of sixteen and twenty.[83] Paradoxically, marriage was the one way for these women to attain a respectable social position.

Thus these women found themselves torn between new economic demands and preexistent social expectations, between their individual future and the fortunes of the family. This position must have raised many questions in the minds of these young women about the relevance of the old rules and traditions. If fathers were neither "protecting" the honor of their girls nor working to marry them off, what did that mean for the daughter's "traditional" obligations? If a young woman was to give all her money to her family, why should she not expect to inherit some of the land just like her brothers, especially when the brothers were not obliged to work long days in the filatures? And if a "factory girl" could stand up for her rights in the factory, then why should she be silent at home? We are not privileged to know the answers to these and many other questions. As far as we know, "factory girls" did not leave any written records to tell us how they felt, nor did any contemporaries bother to record the trials and tribulations of these women. So we have to be content with guessing—on the basis of circumstantial evidence—that the establishment of silk filatures deeply disturbed the politics of gender and confused gender roles. In other words, the "classical" patriarchal contract—which had organized the lives of men and women in the Mountain—strained under the pressures of the new market economy.

Class

As much as women's work in silk factories muddled the lines between gender roles within peasant society, the commercialization of silk confused the boundaries of social divisions. To understand the extent of this change we need to cast a quick glance at "class" as it existed before the time of silk filatures. In those days there were but two social strata in the Mountain: peasants and *shuyukh*. Within this context, status was a hereditary matter. Individuals were born into their "class" and remained there even when their financial state deteriorated or improved. Thus a Khazin *shaykh* who had less money than a peasant in one of "his" villages retained his social preeminence. In fact, one of the charges that the Khazins leveled against the peasants who revolted against them in 1858 was that they were trying to upset this social equilibrium. Even at the height of the 1860 civil war that wracked the Mountain and pitted elites against each other, the *shuyukh* could still agree on one thing: the *ahali* who had become "uppity" should be pushed back into their proper

place. In fact the Khazins, who had been dispatched from Kisrawan by the revolt of the *ahali,* anxiously signed on to a treaty among the *shuyukh* which recommended—among other things—that each person was to return "to his place" as it was in the past.[84]

Equally, a financially comfortable peasant could not use his money to overstep the strict social boundaries that defined his relationship to the *shaykh* of his area. As one manifestation of this gap, Lahad Khatir notes that "the holder of a title [*shaykh, amir,* and so forth] had his clothes and the peasant had his, and the latter could not imitate the first and if he did then [he] was considered to have overstepped his boundary [thus] infringing on the right of that above him, and he was obliged, through force, to return to his familiar clothes."[85]

Strict social guidelines guaranteed, among other things, that no peasant could marry into the *shuyukh* stratum. So, the Shihab family could intermarry only with their social equals the Abi-Lamᶜas. In the Druze town of Ammatur, the ᶜAbd as-Samad and Abu Shaqra family married either within their own families or among each other.[86] Other protocols emphasized daily the disparity of political power as well as the distance between these two classes. A peasant woman had to kiss the hand of the *shaykha* or *amira.*[87] Aside from bearing the brunt of taxes levied in the Mountain, peasants were to give "gifts" to their *shuyukh* (soap and coffee, both of which a peasant was not to enjoy) on several occasions during the year. And on many Sundays—after listening to the exhortation of the priest to do God's work—the peasant was to work the plot of his *shaykh* for free.

These rituals of social power were imbedded in a patriarchal language that made the *shaykh* the ultimate "father" of the male peasants and the *shaykha* the "mother" of the female ones. While arranging a betrothal, for instance, a villager had to obtain the permission of his *shaykh,* much in the same way that a young man had to ask the approval of the patriarchs in his family before any major decision.[88] Within the ranks of the elites, "class" solidarity was reinforced in patriarchal language. Thus, the Christian Nᶜameh family was tied to their "cousins" the Abu Shaqra, who were Druzes, and the Hasans and Mujaʾis were similarly "related." Bashir II, the ruler of Mount Lebanon until 1840, addressed the Druze *shaykh* Bashir Jumblatt as my "brother."[89] Throughout, money was never mentioned even when it did play a role in the definition of class. Hiding the source of elite power behind a language of inherited social position made it that much more difficult to question why the *shuyukh* were living off the work of the *ahali.* (Even during the revolt of 1858, when Maronite

peasants demanded the removal of some of the informal taxes—like the *ʿiddiyya*—they did not explicitly question the social rank of the *shuyukh* or the basic privileges that such a position entailed.)

Silk helped change this state of affairs by clearly establishing money as a signifier of social status. A story about a marriage proposal will help explain this point. Elias Barakat had moved in 1886 to a village in Mount Lebanon called Bishmizeen. There he made a large sum of money trading silk cocoons. One day Elias presented himself in a neighboring village with the intention of choosing a bride for his son from an influential family. After the usual how-do-you-do's and thank-you's, the elders of the other family raised an objection to the marriage proposal by hinting—not so subtly, one must add—about Elias's unknown family background. Since he was a relative newcomer to Bishmizeen and not a man of the land, they were not so sure that he measured up to their social standards, or that he was *mijwaz* (marriageable). In response to this insult, the infuriated Barakat pulled out his money bag, full of gold and silver coins, and flung it on the floor saying, "This is my origin and this is my family heritage!" After a few moments of sizing up the money bag, the patriarch of the other family responded, "And an esteemed origin and kin it is! I bless this marriage!!"[90]

Apart from being an amusing anecdote, this story indicates a changing attitude toward the social rituals of marriage. As some peasants became wealthy through the silk trade, their social aspirations rose, and they were not quite content with the barrier which separated them as fellah—rich or not—from the higher class of *shuyukh.* Like Elias Barakat they sought to better their social ranking by marrying into traditionally important families. At first these overtures were rejected by those of higher social status. Their pride and honor would not allow them to admit the "riffraff" into their midst. In fact they did all they could to secure the social distance between themselves and the upstart rich peasants. A story written by Mikhail Nuʿaymi records the desperate extent to which some elites went in order to avoid the humiliation of marriage below their social status. Titled "His Excellency the Bayk," the story tells of Shaykh Asʿad al-Daʿouq, who descended from a family that had been prominent in the Mountain. Silk, however, had allowed some *shuraka* (sharecroppers) to gather enough money to buy up most of the land that had previously belonged to this clan. Thus, nothing was left for "Shaykh Asʿad from the glory of his grandfathers except for the title of shaykh and uncounted debts." To make matters worse, one of those newly enriched peasants "bought himself the title of Bayk . . . and dared ask Shaykh Asʿad for the hand of one of his daughters in marriage." Livid, Shaykh Asʿad

threw the man out of his house and locked himself and his daughters in, refusing to allow anyone to see his humiliation.[91]

Not all the destitute *shuyukh* had quite that fiery pride. When the economic status of some notable families dropped, their resistance to such proposals likewise took a dive. One contemporary bemoaned this state of affairs, in which "a lady from the Chehab family and their likes allows herself to marry a newly enriched man, even if he was of lowly character; and the prince takes the girl of a dog if she has money. . . . This is modernity."[92] The same realignment of social rank can be observed in letters exchanged between some rich fellahin and *shuyukh.* Before 1858, the greater the social distance between two people the more elaborate were the salutations at the beginning of any correspondence between them. Thus, when peasants petitioned a *shaykh,* the letter would generally begin with something like "His most honorable Excellency, the most illustrious, glorious, and honored *Shaykh* so-and-so, may his life be long . . . "[93] However, the correspondence of a rich peasant like Boutros al-Asfar, who had loaned the Khazins large sums of money, was concise, brief, and its greetings were limited to "Our Dear Brother *Shaykh* so-and-so."[94] Beyond its offensive brevity, this preamble called al-Asfar and the Khazin *shaykh* brothers, elevating the peasant to the social rank of the *shaykh*. In addition, the contents were equally businesslike, without interjections of "Your Excellency" or circuitous requests. Shaykh Qānsuh al-Khazin had to tolerate such "transgressions" because if Boutros al-Asfar asked for all his money back, the *shaykh* would quickly become a pauper—as was obvious to all concerned.

To blur the social lines and power equations further, many of the wealthy peasants began to buy titles, such as *shaykh* and *bey*, and official positions from the Ottoman government. Acquisition of these titles translated into some political influence, but more important it diluted the social preeminence of those who had held such titles for decades and even centuries. Therefore, a wealthy peasant with a newly purchased title could propose to marry the daughter of a *shaykh* or a *bey* without any compunction because, after all, he had become the *shaykh's* equal. Moreover, he was most likely better off economically than the *shaykh,* who was failing to live at the same level as before, let alone keep up with the new and more expensive standard of living. (This new phenomenon was most apparent among the Maronites, where the peasants had clipped the wings of their traditional landlords—like the Khazins—during the Kisrawan revolt of 1858.) While all these changes did not extinguish the social aura of the *shuyukh* (after all those with new silk money were buying up just such "traditional" titles),

they certainly dimmed it. And while lineage and heritage were not written out of the social formula for power and authority, having money did emerge as one way to circumvent the lack of "illustrious" ancestry.[95]

While money from silk was redefining the meaning and composition of the elite in the Mountain, work in the silk factories was creating a new class that occupied the other end of the social spectrum. With the alienation of female work in silk filatures from its original familial context, new definitions of gender and class intersected in the "factory girl," a derogatory term that consecrated the feminization of factory work. Dissolving silk cocoons and spinning their threads became tasks specifically associated with women, as *ʿamila* and silk spinner became synonymous terms. The only masculine term employed within the milieu of silk factories was *nazzar,* or overseer. At the same time, the term *ʿamila* established the boundary between "well-to-do families whose girls went to . . . school and those who were poorer and whose girls worked in the factories."[96] Hence, in the latter part of the nineteenth century, working in a factory came to be regarded socially as poor women's work.

Standing between the esteem which the elites enjoyed and the stigma that adhered to "factory girls," the fellahin of the Mountain saw a path that could take them either way. It was a path that was paved with money, or the lack of it. A series of bad years, dipping silk prices, or just too many siblings could mean descent into a poverty that had become socially "shameful" in the widening breadth of economic possibilities. Those same opportunities could lead a peasant to a more financially comfortable life which also brought social gratification. In other words, peasants could—after the 1860s—envision themselves as landlords, even as they recoiled from the thought of working in silk factories. Class—a group of individuals defined by economic parameters and social ritual—emerged more clearly next to strata—an inheritable position—as a signifier of social status. Moreover, class had become a more variegated social field with greater heights and depths and with a fluidity of movement that must have appeared quite swift in comparison with the near-ossified hierarchy of past times.

A Better Life?

While money from silk was discombobulating the social hierarchy of Mount Lebanon, it was also altering the material expecta-

tions of the peasantry. A shift was underway in the second half of the nineteenth century from an economy of subsistence to one where luxuries were increasingly available and, at times, financially attainable.

Peasants involved in a culture of subsistence were traditionally conservative in their expenditures. A cautious approach toward spending derived from the realities of agriculture in a premechanized world, where the vagaries of nature could destroy crops and drive peasants into debt or worse.[97] Exactions by the *muqataʿji*s and unpredictable multiple tax levies before 1860 made the survival of a family even more uncertain. In such a climate, peasants had about a half to a third of their crop left at the end of the harvest, and this amount had to sustain the whole family through the following winter. Cheap basic foods, like lentils and bread, that provided lots of carbohydrates with little fanfare were the daily staple. Clothing was equally simple and limited to a few items that had to suffice for two years and sometimes more. The home was sparsely furnished with few functional utensils and hardly any decorative elements. In short, the peasant spent hardly any money on items other than those absolutely necessary. By contrast, a developing culture of accumulation meant a propensity to buy items that were not essential for physical survival.[98] Rather, these "luxury" items—which would have been foodstuffs, clothing, furniture, and ornamental mechanical devices—were acquired mainly as social and cultural symbols of economic ease, even when that was a precarious state at best. One way to measure the extent of this shift is to look at levels of consumption.

Sugar was among the most luxurious and novel of food products known in Mount Lebanon. Historically, the diet of the Lebanese peasant called for little in the way of a sweetener like sugar. Grape or carob molasses, honey, figs—fresh and cooked—and raisins were the sweets commonly eaten in the villages. More elaborate desserts were cooked on special occasions. *Mughli,* for instance, a dessert consisting of rice flour, spices, and molasses, was made on the occasion of the birth of a boy.[99] Peasant aversion to "exotic" foods was proverbial as attested to by the saying "The fellah went down to the city and did not desire anything but tahini and molasses."[100] Yet, within sixty years sugar had become a regular staple in the diet of the peasants. One indicator of this change is the increase in the amount of sugar imported into the Mountain. Within a period of only twenty years the quantity of sugar imported through Beirut more than tripled—from 1.3 million kilograms in 1868 to 5 million in 1888.[101] The per capita consumption of sugar amounted to more than 4 kilograms per year.[102]

Rice was another food item which, until the late 1880s, was so expensive that only rich peasants could afford to eat it. Its expense was celebrated in many proverbs and popular sayings, including "Rice is King and bulgur wheat went and hung itself" (that is, rice is the luxury food while bulgur wheat is coarse).[103] Another more explicit proverb recommended that "rather than eat rice [and run out of money, you better] . . . cover your behind."[104] Such forbidding wisdom seems to have become less applicable to the reality of the 1880s on account of the large quantity of rice that was being bought by the Lebanese peasantry at that times. While in the 1840s consular reports did not mention rice among the items imported into Beirut, 4 million kilograms were brought in through that port in 1887.[105] In 1888 the quantity of imported rice increased to about 5 million kilograms, and a year later rice imports jumped to 6.35 million kilograms.[106] In weddings that took place toward the end of the nineteenth century, peasants threw rice over the heads of the groom and bride; a rather extravagant gesture given the "kingly" status and cost of rice. A more telling, albeit still impressionistic, testimony to the increased use of rice among peasants came from the French consul general who, in 1889, remarked that "the locals make daily use of rice."[107]

Coffee, which had been consumed only by the *shuyukh* before 1860, became a drink of choice among the peasants, part of the social rituals that villagers engaged in during visits and celebrations. Thus, coffee was served not only during weddings and funerals, but also when neighbors came over for a social gathering in the winter evenings. The inclusion of this luxury into daily peasant life is readily reflected in the numbers of coffee sacks imported into Beirut and the Mountain. Peering through commercial reports filed by French consuls general from "Beyrout," we can trace this shift. As late as 1861 there was not a single report of coffee among the items imported through Beirut and into the Mountain. Equally, reports from the port of Sidon were devoid of any mention of this item. One report notes that the equivalent of 230,000 French francs in "colonial" goods (coffee and sugar) were imported into Beirut in 1862.[108] Thirty years later coffee warrants a more detailed entry in the reports. In a dispatch dated May 30, 1889, coffee warranted a whole paragraph that noted among other things that 173,000 kilograms of Yemeni coffee and 244,000 kilograms of Brazilian beans were brought into the port of Beirut. Additionally, the report recorded the changing cost of one kilogram of coffee from 2.35 francs (for the Yemeni brand) in 1887 to 2.7 francs in 1888. Similarly, Brazilian coffee underwent an increase from 1.95 francs per kilogram in 1887, to 2.25 francs for that same measure a year

later.[109] By 1892, close to half a million kilograms of coffee were being ground, brewed, and sipped from demitasses in the homes of Lebanese villagers.[110]

Consumption of sugar, rice, and coffee was an indication of a shift not only in taste but also in the standard of living and its social representation. Given the stately status of rice and the use of sugar and coffee exclusively as "gifts" to the *muqataᶜji*s before 1860, their addition to the diet of the peasantry in the later part of the nineteenth century must be construed as a symbol of the peasantry's climb up the social ladder or at least as an attempt to present an image of such mobility. By sharing in what used to be the fare of the elite, the peasant was in essence partaking of their social prestige.

Peasants' efforts to imitate the styles of the elite or, more appropriately, to obtain a few luxury items hardly constitute a new phenomenon. But if the aspirations had always existed among the peasantry, the lack of means and opportunity had kept these items beyond reach. This reality was written into folk tales that recorded the changing perceptions that peasants had of their world. In folk tales from the early part of the nineteenth century, for instance, we find few in which poor peasants acquire riches through their honesty, hard work, or luck. More commonly they were either tales of mythical Arabian heroes such as ᶜAntar or stories of princes and princesses—distant elites that one could admire only from behind an insurmountable barrier. By the latter half of the same century, new themes had made their way into folk tales.[111] Among these we find some where the peasant becomes wealthy after one feat or another. In one of the stories a poor honest woman receives money from a group of magical mice. She spends it on buying clothes for herself and her husband, and, consequently, "Haris [her husband] wore for the first time in his life a necktie and learned how to knot it."[112]

What we find, then, is that the political Règlement of 1861 and the commercialization of silk coalesced to allow a peasant choice in how to spend his or her money. In other words, the peasantry could select how they desired to represent themselves. Clothes and food no longer divided peasant from *shaykh* simply by dint of political decisions on the part of the *muqataᶜji*s. Rather, their increased variety allowed for social gradation that was signaled in style and quality and that depended mainly on how much money one was willing and able to spend. This increased ability to make choices gradually, even if only partially, transformed peasants into consumers and diverted them ever so slightly from the culture of subsistence.

Conclusion

Beneath the "long peace" which reigned in the Mountain after 1860, momentous changes were brought about by silk.[113] These seismic rumbles were unleashed because some peasants chose to participate in an economy that was as promising as it was volatile. Gender, class, and material life—the stuff from which identities were shaped—were thrown into a greater state of flux by money from silk. Thus, the fortunes and lives of the peasantry came to be tied to sacks of cocoons. Uncertainty about the success of the crop and fluctuating prices made this relationship complex and erratic.

Weather, the suitability of the silkworm eggs, and incubation conditions all contributed to the annual yield of silk cocoons. For instance, in 1862 the French consul general reported that "for many years now the silkworm eggs coming from Syria have not been successful [in producing silkworms]."[114] In 1875 unseasonable rain and cold weather in May ruined at least half the silk crop. Finally, as one observer remarked in 1906, "most of the years the [silkworm] crop is not good because of the unsuitability of these [hatching] places that were generally very humid."[115] Together, these factors led the French consul general to report in 1890 that the "growers [of silkworm] in Syria have suffered in these last years from a progressive diminution in the volume of cocoons [harvested]."[116]

The price of the silk cocoons mattered as much as the yield, and, to the further detriment of the Lebanese peasant, this price was controlled from Marseilles and Lyons rather than locally. This was such an accepted fact that the French consul general could simply note in passing in 1879 that "since it is the state of harvests in France and Italy which regulates the market in Syria, we have noticed considerable fluctuations this year in the price of cocoons and silk [thread]."[117] Overall, some patterns can be discerned in the changes in silk prices between 1788 and 1914.[118] Two concern us the most in this discussion: the rise and collapse of silk prices. Immediately after the introduction of French silk factories into the Mountain and the expansion of exports to France, the price of silk cocoons increased at an unprecedented rate. Between 1850 and 1872, for example, the price of one *oka* (1.28 kilograms) of silk cocoons rose rapidly from 15 piasters to 45.5 piasters.[119] Yet, as French industrialists began to buy their cocoons from China and Japan, and as Lebanese silk factories went out of business, those prices began an irreversible and steep downward trend.[120] Thus, the price hovered around 22 piasters per *oka* through

the 1880s, and after the 1890s it fell to the 19 piasters mark, from which it never recovered.[121]

This collapse was painfully relevant for a generation whose material expectations had been raised by the stupendous prices of the 1860s and 1870s. It was not simply that their life-styles suffered from the shrinking income but that their fragile social stature was beginning to disintegrate. As they slid into greater debt, peasants could see themselves moving backward after having experienced the possibility of a better life. Silk, then, had lifted hopes only to dash them for most Lebanese peasants; it brought into view new possibilities for life, only to snatch them away. For some of the *ahali* of the Mountain, this turn of events had to be borne with as much dignity as possible. For others it was intolerable. They searched for other means to cling to the shelf of newfound respectability that they had come to occupy. Mount Lebanon offered them little in economic opportunities other than sericulture. To benefit from job opportunities in the government bureaucracy or the merchant houses of Beirut, one needed a decent education—something peasants did not have ready access to. Work in silk factories was even less desirable than it was available because it was "women's" work. For many this situation left only one way out: to leave the Mountain in search of opportunities.

3

Emigration

"Mamma, what do you think? I want to go to America and I will be away from you for two years." . . . She said, "What is this talk? I want you to get married before anything else. . . . Take her with you so she can work for her family; . . . they are in need." "Never mind," I said, "God will help them."

—Michel Haddy, interview, 1962

In 1871 two men left the coast of Lebanon for the United States. We do not know their names, or why they chose such a lonely and unprecedented endeavor. Moreover, for over a decade after, few followed in their footsteps to either North or South America. In fact, until 1886 only a few hundred emigrants were recorded to have left the Mountain, and most went to South America.[1] Yet, in 1887 hundreds began to emigrate to the United States, Brazil, and Argentina, and by the middle of the 1890s the yearly recorded numbers were in the thousands.[2] By the time World War I erupted on the European continent, almost one third of the population of Mount Lebanon had left their villages and towns seeking fortunes in unfamiliar lands. For a people who thought a trip to neighboring Damascus was at once a courageous and foolhardy act, emigration across the seas could not have been an undertaking entered into lightly.[3] Accentuating these willful acts of departure from the norm is their sheer magnitude as a phenomenon. Collectively these peasants marked history in an indelible manner that prompts us as latter-day observers to take note and ask why they left their homes for unknown futures.

The Persecution Theory

Some historians have attributed this human movement to the persecution of Christians—who made up the overwhelming majority of the emigrants—at the hands of the ruling Ottoman administration and by neighboring Muslims. This myth, as it were, was developed originally by some of the newcomers themselves, particularly those of Maronite background. To understand the reasons behind such a fabrication, it is important to note that throughout the nineteenth century various Maronite intellectuals and elites—secular and religious—were concerned with establishing a "Maronite nation."[4] To bring such a project to successful fruition, it was necessary to enlist the support of external Western powers by appealing to them along the assumed common lines of Christianity. Writers like Abraham Rihbany, George Haddad, and Philip Hitti portrayed Christians in Mount Lebanon as defenseless victims of persecution, oppressed by ruthless "Turks" who extorted money from them.[5] Such narratives were "corroborated" by articles published in the popular Western press and written by missionaries returning from Lebanon. One such report appeared in 1896 in the *New York Times.* The author referred to the Muslims in Lebanon as "non-speakable" Turks who were bent on expelling all the Christians from the Holy Land.[6] That Lebanon was not quite the "Holy Land" and that Muslim-Christian tensions there did not derive from one-sided persecution were niceties that somehow did not matter. Even the emigrants themselves were prone to embellish their personal stories with horrific tales of massacres and persecution. Yusuf Bey, the Ottoman consul in Barcelona, remarked on this tendency in a 1889 report to the Porte: "When questioned why they had to leave their homes in such large numbers, they invent ridiculous stories about the massacre of their wives and children . . . all to increase the compassion and thus the alms they can elicit."[7] What is striking about this myth is its durability. As late as 1992 some scholars were attributing Lebanese emigration to "banditry, economic decay, poverty and religious and social conflict. In times of religious strife, the Christians were apt to suffer massacre at the hands of their better armed Druze and Muslim neighbors."[8]

Belying this mythology are various contemporary sources, indigenous and otherwise. Documents from the Ottoman archives show that Ottoman policy toward the Lebanese in general, and toward their emigration in particular, was hardly uniform or oppressive. Allowing for the

presence of corruption within the Ottoman administration of the Mountain and the city of Beirut, these documents illustrate two things. First, various Ottoman governors of the Mountain had different agendas and attitudes toward the inhabitants, who in turn had different reactions to these Mutasarrifs. Franko Pasha, the governor of Mount Lebanon from 1868 to 1873, was well liked and remembered by many observers for his cordial relations with the Maronite church and the European consular corps, as well as for his efforts to bring prosperity to the people of Lebanon. One measure of his popularity with the Maronite of the Mountain is their support for the nomination of his nephew, Naum Pasha, for the position of governor in 1892. However, Rüstem Pasha (who was governor between 1873 and 1883) was neither fondly remembered nor particularly receptive to the demands of the Maronite religious and secular elites. Rather, he "made a point of establishing cordial but equidistant and formal relations with all major groups and institutions wielding influence in the Mountain, including the Maronite Church and the French Consulate."[9]

Second, establishing that different governors had different agendas, varying by small or large degrees, leads to another (self-evident) observation. Ottoman governors, as well as more minor officials, were hardly omnipotent in Mount Lebanon. Rather they had to constantly contend with the intervention of European consuls, the machinations of local politicians, and the distant demands of the Sublime Porte. Dealing with these conflicting currents, the governors had to play a balancing act that precluded any notion of complete control. If anything, it appears at times that the local elites were successful not only in blocking an Ottoman action but also in forcing the resignation of the governor over that action. One such instance occurred during the governorship of Muzaffer Pasha (1902–1907). Among the various changes he tried to effect was an increase in taxes by 30 piasters on every *dirhem* of cultivated land. This money was supposed to fund, among other things, seventeen new positions of inspector for various governmental departments. However, the popular outcry against the taxes and "unnecessary" expenditures forced Muzaffer to rescind his appointments and return the tax rates to their previous levels.[10]

On balance, most evidence that we have shows that the Ottoman administration tried to accommodate the needs of the population of the Mountain. Except in a few instances, the governors kept from even trying to raise the artificially low taxes in the Mountain. To wit, the 1861 Règlement gave the Ottoman administration the right to collect 1.75 million piasters in taxes from the Mountain's inhabitants. This figure was

based on a cadastral survey of the lands completed in 1861 which grossly underestimated the true extent of agricultural plots in the Mountain, particularly those held by the Maronite Church. Even after the extent of cultivable lands increased over the following fifty years, the tax base could not be revised because of the standing objection of the Lebanese. Moreover, expenditures of the administration of Lebanon outpaced income by over 2 million piasters, a difference that the central government in Istanbul supplied over a twenty-year period before its patience ran out. In 1910, when the male population had reached—at least—the 200,000 mark, the personal tax was still being collected on the basis of the 1861 census, which counted 99,843 adult males (above fifteen years of age) in the Mountain.[11] In addition to these glaring tax advantages, the inhabitants of the Mountain enjoyed improvements in transportation (length of roads increased from 38 kilometers to 1,104 between 1860 and 1912), the right to avoid conscription into the Ottoman army during times of war, as well as greater freedoms of expression. It thus becomes quite clear that neither were the Ottomans quite the "monsters" they were drawn as, nor were the Lebanese "oppressed."

But one need not depend solely on Ottoman sources to reach this conclusion. Reports by various French, English, and U.S. consuls, based in Beirut and unsympathetic to the Ottomans, contradict reports of persecution of Christians in Lebanon. Shortly after the civil war of 1860, Lord Dufferin, who was in the region to investigate the causes of that conflict at the behest of the British government, wrote:

> When I first came to this country I was under the impression of those natural sentiments of indignation [against] the atrocities perpetrated by the Druses on the Christians. . . . To my surprise however I soon began to discover . . . that there were two sides to the story. . . . I am now in a position to state, without fear of contradiction, that however criminal may have been the excesses to which the Druses were subsequently betrayed, the original provocation came from the Christians.[12]

A later, and perhaps more neutral commentary, came from U.S. consul general Ravndal about the state of unrest gripping the city of Beirut during the fall of 1903.[13] His report painted a picture of a city in transition from being a traditionally Muslim stronghold to one dominated demographically and economically by Christians newly descended from the Mountain. While he faults the Muslims of the city for not accepting this change, he also places part of the blame for continued conflict at the door of a "weak and indecisive" Ottoman administration that was incapable of arresting Christian

suspects implicated in various violent incidents. Moreover, he reported that the Maronites of northern Lebanon "seem to be prominently identified with the policy of sowing distrust and accentuating existing differences between the Moslems of the city [Beirut] and the Christians of the mountains." Finally, he noted that as a result of the "troubles" over thirty thousand Christians had left the city for the mountains.[14]

From this one glimpses an intricate political life in Lebanon around the time of the emigration movement. For Christians to leave the city in search of security indicates that the mountains were considered a safe haven of sorts, even by those who later spoke of persecution at the hand of Ottoman authorities. In turn, these authorities—while biased against the Christians—do not appear to have been capable of persecuting that community, even if one accepts the idea that they intended to do so. Standing between these authorities and the population at large were the European powers, among whom the Maronites singled out "Our Mother France" for protection. In one instance after another, the Ottoman authorities would retreat from decisions in the face of local opposition backed by European sponsors. In practice, then, Christians were not persecuted in Mount Lebanon, even if they felt at odds with Ottoman administrations and wary of their Muslim neighbors.

"Ceilings of Glass"[15]

Real or imagined persecution, then, does not explain the emigration of Lebanese peasants. Instead, as one can imagine, each emigrant had an individual tale of the events that led him or her out of the village and onto roads to foreign lands. In 1884 Daᶜad Fatūh left her husband and two-year-old son in Lebanon and sailed to New Orleans to make money.[16] Tafeda Beshara's aunt, Sadie, came back for a visit to Rachaya from the United States and convinced Tafeda's father to let her take the little girl, whose mother had died, back to Hartford to "bring her up."[17] After completing his education at the American University in Beirut, Simᶜan Abdenour left that city in 1906 to attend the medical school at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore.[18] In light of these and many other stories, it would be inadvisable to speak definitively of a cause or causes for Lebanese emigration. However, amidst the great variety of stories and the history of the 1880s and 1890s, a pattern of emigration can be discerned. People seem to have left for the Americas because they could

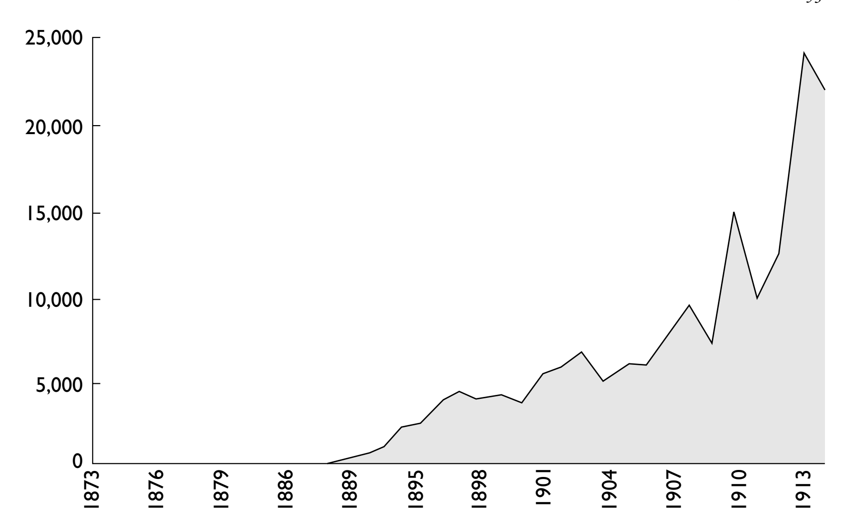


Figure 1. Rate of Lebanese emigration to the United States. Figures from Immigration Commission, *Reports of the Immigration Commission: Statistical Review of Immigration, 1820–1910,* 61st Cong., 3rd sess., 1911, S. Doc. 756, and *Reports of the Immigration Commission,* 63rd Cong., 3rd sess., 1915.

and because they wanted a better life. Trite as these two reasons may appear to be, they in fact explain much of the human movement across continents. A more detailed explanation will illustrate my point.

From Figure 1, it should be apparent that far more emigrants left Lebanon for the United States after the turn of the century than before. Similar patterns of emigration hold true for South American destinations like Brazil and Argentina.[19] If one adds to this the fact that the great majority of the emigrants (96 percent) were in their forties or younger,[20] then one can assume that most of the men and women who emigrated were born after 1860. The significance of this conclusion surfaces if one recalls that the Règlement Organique of 1861 mandated a greater measure of individual freedoms for the inhabitants of Mount Lebanon. Among these was freedom of movement without interference on the part of the political elites, the *shuyukh,* of the Mountain. The cynic could dismiss such legislation as nothing more than words on paper. Yet, thirty years after the fact, and particularly for the generation born after 1860, which had no encounter with the earlier and more arbitrary power of the *shuyukh,* these words were legal measures that did open venues of social and physical movement within and out of the country.

Commentaries from various sources help establish this point. In a report in 1885 the Russian consul in Beirut, Constantin Dimitrievich Petkovich, states:

> Despite the many faults one can find in the Lebanese administration . . . one must admit that this administration has contributed in large degree to the improvement in the material and moral state of the population. . . . For the current Lebanese administration has guaranteed for the Lebanese a greater measure of tranquility and social security, and it has guaranteed individual rights. . . . With this it has superceded that which the Ottoman administration provides for the populations of neighboring wilayat [province].[21]

A petition by Shiʿa villagers addressed to the British consul Arthur Eldridge supports these contentions. In their letter the peasants requested Eldridge's help in annexing their lands to the Mountain because "people there enjoy greater security, freedom and smaller taxes."[22] More tellingly, we find that in most personal accounts of emigration the Ottoman authorities rarely make an appearance. While stories of seasickness, excitement, and fear on reaching new cities like Montevideo and tales of circumventing immigration officers abound in these accounts, we do not come across any mention of Ottoman officers, or others, stopping the emigrants. Instead, and after a few unsuccessful attempts at halting the emigration movement, the Ottomans simply acquiesced to its reality.

The Sublime Porte began to be alarmed by the high rate of emigration from the Mountain toward the end of the 1880s. A series of letters exchanged between the central government and the Mutasarrif of Lebanon discuss the possibility of limiting emigration by vigilantly applying existing rules and regulations dealing with the issue of travel documents. Yet, despite this official attention, the illegal use of internal travel documents (*tezkere*) for the purpose of emigration continued unabated through the 1890s. The Ottoman officials did not have the means to police the long coast of Lebanon. *Sarrafs* (smugglers) worked through gaping holes in the coastal border to ferry peasants on board European steamboats that made unscheduled stops in the Christian ports of Jounieh and Jubayl. Corrupt police officers were also quite willing to look the other way—in exchange for a few piasters—as aspiring emigrants in Beirut and Tripoli illegally boarded boats heading for Marseilles, Barcelona, and Liverpool. Compounding this porous situation was the large number of *tezkere* that were being issued by the Mutasarrifiyya. For example, in May of 1892 the Beirut police superintendent reported that large numbers of Lebanese were boarding boats in Beirut and Tripoli bound for other Ottoman ports.

He added that while he was certain that these individuals were actually intent on emigrating, he could do little to stop them since they held valid travel permits.[23] Given all these difficulties, the imperial government, on the recommendation of the governor of Beirut, "issued a decision [in 1899] suppressing the regulation that prohibited the emigration of the Syrians."[24] Not surprisingly, soon after that decision the numbers of annual emigrants from Lebanon went from the hundreds to the thousands.

Unfettering the peasants from the land is but one part of the puzzle of this migration movement; another was money. It took money to leave the village, buy a ticket, bribe officials, pay off the *sarrafs,* stay at hotels along the way, and take care of oneself in the first few days—at least—of arrival in the new country. To legally obtain a *tezkere* the peasant had to pay close to 50 piasters in official and unofficial charges, in addition to securing—after the change in Ottoman immigration policy in 1899—a bond equivalent to $178. At the port of Beirut throughout the 1890s, emigrating peasants had to pay various fees ("barge expenses," "donations" to the Hijaz railway project) amounting to over $9. To get on the steamboats, peasants purchased tickets from Beirut to Marseilles and on to New York or Rio de Janeiro at a cost ranging from $10 to $15. Hostelries where emigrants stayed along the way were another expense. An advertisement on the front page of the semiofficial newspaper of the Mutasarrifiyya, *Lubnan,* announced in 1907 that the Hotel de Syrie in Marseilles was ready to welcome "our travelling Syrian brothers." It promised furnished and unfurnished rooms with facilities for cooking and cleaning, as well as assistance in making travel arrangements "to all parts of the world." According to the advertisement, rooms started at 30 paras (2.6 cents) per night, although in reality the rooms cost ten times this amount, and the emigrants were thus about $4 poorer by the time they checked out.[25]

More depleting than these fixed expenses was the financial exploitation to which these travelers were subjected—especially in the early days of emigration—in Beirut and intermediate ports such as Marseilles. In announcing the lifting of restrictions on emigration from Mount Lebanon, the official gazette, *Beirut,* noted on March 18, 1899, that now "Lebanon[ese] fellaheen . . . can go anywhere they like without falling in the traps which used to be set for them by smugglers who minded nothing but their own personal interest."[26] Amin Rihani, a contemporary Lebanese writer, satirized the financial plight of emigrants in his novel *The Book of Khalid.* Writing of Shakib and Khalid, two emigrants who arrive in Marseilles from Beirut, Rihani muses:

> They were rudely shaken by the sharpers, who differ only from the boatmen of Beirut in that they . . . intersperse their Arabic with a jargon of French. These brokers, like rapacious bats, hover around the emigrant. . . . From the steamer, the emigrant is led to a dealer in frippery, where he is required to doff his baggy trousers, and crimson cap, and put on a suit of linsey-woolsey and a hat of hispid felt. . . . From the dealer of frippery, . . . he is taken to the hostelry, where he is detained a fortnight, sometimes a month. . . . From the hostelry to the steamship agent, where they secure for him a third-class passage on the fourth-class ship across the Atlantic.[27]

Even after all this exploitation, Lebanese immigrants arriving at Ellis Island had in their possession—on average—$31.85.[28] Adding the tangible numbers alone—and there were many hidden costs that are hard to quantify—we find that an average peasant started out of Beirut or Tripoli with a $63 purse. If we throw in some estimates of intangibles such as bribes and food, the figure could go as high as $80, or close to 2,500 piasters—the salary of a policeman or the tuition at a boarding school for children of the elite in Lebanon.

Where did emigrants come up with these sums of money for the financially arduous journey? In the pioneering days of emigration (1880s to 1890s) peasants mortgaged their land, borrowed from relatives, sold jewelry, got loans from richer neighbors. Tannous Abu Dilly, from the village of ᶜAyn ᶜArab, was one of those "neighbors" who loaned many people their fares to the United States. While many repaid their loans on time, others defaulted, and Tannous traveled to their towns overseas to collect some money from them.[29] Even in later years (1900–1914), when emigrants were sending back to Lebanon money and steamboat tickets for relatives to join them in their endeavors, some families had resort to older means to finance their journeys. One woman, Skiyyé Sabha Samaha, wanted to take her son and rejoin her husband in the United States. She had to sell all her jewelry and borrow 20 liras ($65) from her husband's aunt in Lebanon to finance the trip.[30] Regardless of how peasants obtained the money, it is clear that it made immigration to the Americas a possibility that could not have been entertained before the 1880s.

More tellingly, the figures we reviewed above lead us to the conclusion that most emigrants from the Mountain were poor but not destitute. This conclusion in turn brings us face to face with another explanatory part of the puzzle of emigration—namely, peasants were not seeking financial salvation, but rather financial amelioration. The generation of peasants (born after 1860) which was capable of leaving Lebanon was also facing new financial realities. Having grown up in the fairly prosperous times of the 1860s and 1870s, this generation had come to expect

that they could at least maintain, if not improve on, the standard of living of their parents. Yet, by the 1880s it was growing difficult to maintain these expectations. Silk prices were stagnating, the population was increasing dramatically, and land was becoming more dear.

By the time children born after 1860 had come of age, silk had been established as a crop of unprecedented importance within the economy of their families. If, as one contemporary commented in 1879, "the majority of [arable] lands in Mount Lebanon were covered with mulberry trees,"[31] then it only follows that the majority of the peasants' income derived either directly or indirectly from silk. Some numbers will serve to illustrate this point. In 1879 silk cocoons accounted for over 38 percent of the total income of the Mountain. Only wheat, which brought in about 21 percent of Mount Lebanon's income, came close to approximating the financial preeminence of silk. In later years this gap between silk and other products only yawned. For example, in 1906 in the district of Metn, silk provided approximately 82 percent of the total revenue.[32] That same year the inhabitants of Dardoreet, a Maronite village in the Shūf district, made 173,320 piasters from their silk crop, while olive oil brought them only 12,000 piasters, and the value of their sheep did not exceed 6,250 piasters. In Mount Lebanon as a whole, silk accounted for an income of a little over 42 million piasters, while the sale of olive oil and the potential value of sheep together amounted to no more than 29 million piasters. In other words, in 1906 the silk crop made up—on average—60 percent of the peasant family's income. Of course variations existed within this general scheme. Residents of areas that heavily favored silk—like the Metn, Kisrawan, and Shūf districts—naturally obtained a greater share of their annual income from the culture of the silkworm. Yet, the preponderance of mulberry trees in all the regions of Mount Lebanon made silk an indispensable source of income for the majority of peasant families during the second half of the nineteenth century. In fact, by the early 1900s, silk was providing, directly and indirectly, 72 percent of the peasantry's revenues obtained from the production of goods.[33]

Even as dependence on silk had grown enormously, prices of this cash crop had begun an irreversible downward trend. Figure 2 demonstrates this problem, which plagued the "baby boomers" of the 1860s. While the prices of one *oka* of silk cocoons had been catapulted by European demands during the 1850 and 1860s from 8 to 40 piasters and above, the 1880s saw a reversal of that trend. Beginning with the collapse of the market in 1875, and despite a brief recovery in the mid-1880s, the price of silk hovered around a meager 22 piasters per *oka*. This depression in prices derived from the strong entry of China and Japan into the worldwide silk



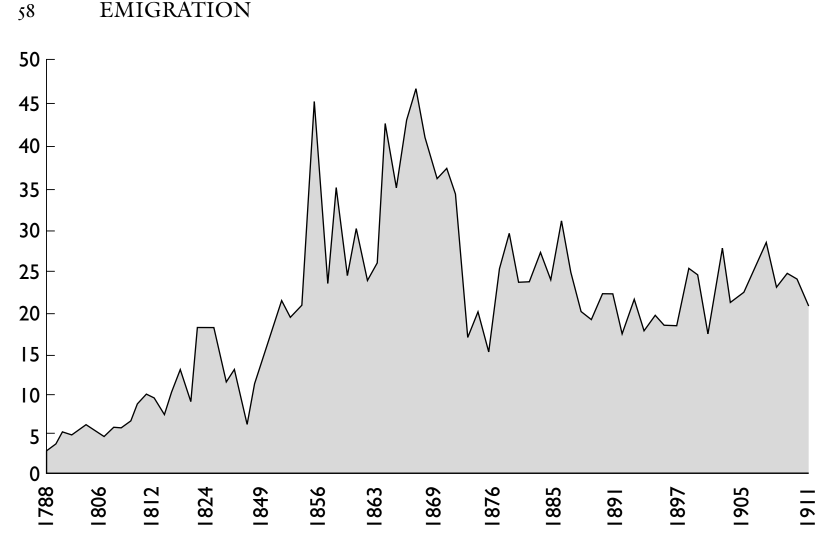


Figure 2. Price (in piasters) of one *oka* of silk cocoons. Figures from Gaston Ducousso, *L'Industrie de la soie en Syrie.* (Paris: A. Challemel, 1913); Dominique Chevallier, *La Société du Mont Liban à l'époque de la révolution industrielle en Europe* (Paris: Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner, 1971); AE CC, Correspondance commerciale, 1831–1898.

market. Cocoons from these two countries tended to be of better quality and even cheaper than the Lebanese product. This entry of East Asian producers was due in large part to the opening of the Suez Canal, which had cut the distance between London and Bombay in half and thus brought down transportation costs for shipments between East Asia and Europe.

In addition to the lower prices which silk was bringing in, the young generation of peasants had to deal with a growing uncertainty in the success of crops. The production of silk was never of a stable nature, yet this fluctuation became more pronounced in the second half of the nineteenth century. For instance, after a bumper crop in 1866, the number of cocoons harvested in the Mountain plummeted to less than one third of the normal yield four years later. Similar, albeit less severe, setbacks occurred in 1876, 1877, 1879, 1885, 1891, 1895, and as late as 1909.[34] These crises were due to several factors, first among which was the quality and source of the silkworm eggs. According to the French consul general, "It has been several years now [1868] that the silkworm eggs coming from Syria have

not succeeded [in producing silkworms]." Because of this failure and the greater demand for silkworm eggs, "individuals leave every year to buy [silkworm eggs] in Egypt, Cyprus and Candi [Lombardy]."[35] However, this solution was far from perfect since those types of eggs were bred in different environmental settings that made them rather unsuited to either the climate of Mount Lebanon or the tougher type of mulberry leaves found in its hills. As a result they never provided yields equal to those given by indigenous eggs before the 1850s. For example, while, in 1854, 25 grams of local eggs produced close to 54 kilograms of cocoons, by the 1880s a box (25 grams) of Japanese eggs yielded a bare 29 kilograms. In later years, matters got only worse for the Lebanese peasants. Between 1906 and 1911 the average yield of 25 grams of eggs in Mount Lebanon was 22.733 kilograms of cocoons. When this Lebanese yield is compared with the lowest yield in France, where the same amount of eggs hatched 44.4 kilograms of silkworms cocoons, it becomes ever more clear that the Lebanese peasants were experiencing disappointing returns on their investments.[36]

Lower prices and meager yields were not the only discouraging economic signs facing younger farmers after the 1880s. A mushrooming population was increasing the pressure on the already strained resources of the Mountain. While exact figures for the number of people who lived along the rugged edges of Mount Lebanon still elude us, we can paint a broad picture of the population trends. In summary, many more children were born, and lived through adulthood, after 1860 than did before that year. Between 1783 and 1860, the population of the Mountain had risen from 120,000 to only about 200,000, or an increase of about 67 percent in seventy-seven years.[37] Only two decades later, the population had leapfrogged to 280,000, and by 1913 there were 414,800 people living in the Mountain. Even if we do not include the estimated 155,600 emigrants residing in North and South America, the population jump still amounts to 107 percent in the fifty-three years after 1860, or almost double the growth experienced before that year.[38]

Various factors coalesced to bring about this change. Most obvious—and perhaps most crucial—is the fact that the Mountain experienced no violent upheavals between 1860 and the onset of World War I. In comparison, the thirty years preceding 1860 saw two major civil wars, a number of peasant revolts, a revolt against the Egyptian occupation forces, and famines. During that time over ten thousand people died.[39] Peace during the Mutasarrifiyya period also allowed for medical improvements, which

subsequently contributed to the population increase. For instance, in 1881 the "Lebanese Administration" launched a program of inoculation against smallpox—a disease that was ravaging the districts neighboring Mount Lebanon—and by the end of the century over half the population had been immunized.[40] In addition to these measures, Mount Lebanon was effectively quarantined during outbreaks of diseases in Beirut or surrounding territories. In one such instance, in the summer of 1900, a plague had beset Beirut, which prompted the Mutasarrif Naoum Pasha to prohibit any contact between the Mountain and the city. Along with the local residents who were trapped by this quarantine was the French consul general de Sersi, who demanded special permission to leave Beirut for the mountains. Much to the chagrin of the consul, who fumed and threatened, the Mutasarrif rejected his request on the premise that he was human like all the other residents of the city and thus could be a carrier of the disease.[41] Finally, a high birth rate among the peasants was partially responsible for driving the population figures higher. For example, in an 1847 dispatch the French consul general Bourée estimated that on average a Maronite family had 6.2 children, while its Druze counterpart had 4.6 children.[42]

As the population grew by leaps and bounds, land became more dear. One observer wrote of the 1890s, "It got to the point where what was divided among the heirs was no longer a piece of land but the thick branches of mulberry trees . . . and the olive tree crop."[43] Even allowing for literary license the point remains valid. Two comparative numbers will suffice to prove this contention. During the 1864 census of Mount Lebanon, it was estimated that 125,238 *dirhem*s of land (176,586 acres) were under cultivation.[44] By 1918 the amount of land exploited for agriculture was a little over 140,000 *dirhem*s (197,600 acres).[45] In total, then, the increase was barely 15,000 *dirhem*s (20,889 acres), which represents an anemic additional 11.8 percent of fields to plow, plant, and harvest. The meagerness of this change becomes even more pronounced when we correlate it with the increase in population. If in 1864 an average peasant representing the 200,000 inhabitants of the country had access to 0.88 acres of land, fifty years later that hypothetical peasant would have to contend with half that plot. In other words, as hard as peasants worked to hold on to land, their efforts were frustrated by their own children, who were growing up to find that little land had to be subdivided among too many male siblings.[46] The effect of such intense population pressure on the limited resources of the Mountain was to drive land prices skyward, beyond the reach of our average peasant.

Pulling these various elements together, we can begin to draw the picture that faced the post-1860 generation of peasants. Having grown up

in relative prosperity, these peasants were facing limitations that threatened to send them economically a few steps backward. At the end of the 1880s silk was no longer the golden crop it had been ten or twenty years before. At the same time, rising land prices and shrinking inheritance combined to make the economic future bleak. So it was that many peasants arrived at the year 1887 with a sense of malaise. They did not have much land, and what little they had did not promise to make them a "good" living. For those seeking to simply make a living (have money for food, clothes, and a modest shelter), there were few jobs. They could work as servants in the cities (about four thousand were doing so in 1884), they could join the gendarmerie (another few hundred opted for that), they could hire out as agricultural laborers, or (if they were women) they could work in the silk factories. Although some villagers did migrate seasonally to neighboring cities (like Aleppo and Bursa), these areas provided limited opportunities as they were experiencing their own economic crises. Aside from the fact that none of these avenues offered much income, they also meant leaving the land or at least losing status as an independent farmer. In either case, the result was not socially gratifying, to say the least. These drawbacks made a large number of peasants look for other ways out of their dilemma—namely, how to make enough money quickly to guarantee their status as landowners and not slip into the ranks of the landless laborers. About the only option that appeared on the economic horizons was emigration.

At first (in the 1880s) few hardy souls ventured along this uncharted path. In tens they left the Mountain to take a steamboat somewhere across the sea—where, they were not exactly certain. We are no more certain of how they would have heard about financial opportunities in the Americas.[47] However there were several possibilities. For one, we know of an Ottoman pavilion at the Philadelphia Centennial Exhibit of 1876 and of a couple of Lebanese who were in attendance. One can imagine the stories they brought back about the "wonders" they saw there and how these stories—properly embellished and spiced—would have meandered along with muleteers across the Mountain. Or it is conceivable that at the port of Beirut they were not only unloading French sugar and English cloth but also "strange" stories of South America and its abundant riches. Schools (which were proliferating after 1860, and most notable of which was the American institution known then as the Syrian Protestant College) and the handful of newspapers and few books that were published in Beirut and its environs may very well have carried some tales of America, emigration, or both. (We certainly know that to have

been the case in the 1890s and later). Some members of the burgeoning foreign community in Beirut—who summered in Mount Lebanon to escape the heat and humidity—may indeed have pontificated about the civil war in America or disdainfully mentioned the European migration to that "land of opportunity." Ultimately, it could have been the few Lebanese who traveled to Paris, London, or Rome who brought back in their cultural baggage news of these "new" lands. In any or all of these cases, the result was that those who were boarding the ships at Beirut vaguely knew to go to "Amirka," south or north.

It did not take long for these adventurers to write back letters laden with praise for the lands they discovered. Michel H. recounted one such letter, which prompted him to emigrate to the United States. "In 1892 not many people were going to America. This family went to America and they wrote back . . . [to say that] they made $1000 [in three years]. . . . When people of ᶜAyn ᶜArab saw that one man made . . . $1000, all of ᶜAyn ᶜArab rushed to come to America. . . . Like a gold rush we left ᶜAyn ᶜArab, there were 72 of us."[48] Such (tall?) tales of easy money would have probably been little more than amusing anecdotes for the folks back home were it not for the evidence of newfound wealth. In the first years of emigration, letters would sometimes come with a money order for a few hundred dollars. But by the 1890s emigrants were making the journey back to get married, see the family, take a rest, and flaunt their financial fortunes. They came dressed to the hilt, wearing gold watches and Panama hats. Tafeda Beshara vividly remembered her aunt's first visit back to Rachaya: "Well, I had no picture of America. . . . But my aunt had already been there and she made a lot of money peddling so she went back for a visit. Ho! She was dressed and fixed and what—she was in her prime then, you know— . . . silk and ostrich feathers and diamonds and a watch pinned to her chest. That picture of her is just priceless. . . . Oh she came back and she had the money."[49]

Memories of coming back and "having money" were common enough to become part of the fiction of the period. In one such story, Mikhail Nuᶜaymi wrote about a peasant named Khattar whose fiancée (Zumurrud) was seduced by the sight and status of a "cocoo clock" (grandfather clock) into eloping with the emigrant who had brought it into the village. In the aftermath of the scandalous event (which gave Zumurrud's father a heart attack and would go on to claim a few other victims), Khattar was left pondering his life and future. One day while plowing his plot, he suddenly stopped, looked around, and thought to himself, "Until when Khattar, until when? You have buried in this soil twenty years

of your life, and what has it given you? . . . It is shameful that a man like Faris Khaybir [the man with the "cocoo clock"] could steal your love, and [he] would not have stolen it without his money for which he had traveled the seas. So what ties you to these rocks? . . . And Khattar went to America."[50] Despite its heavy-handed moralizing, Nu^caymi's story still manages to depict at least one impact of the return of moneyed emigrants to the villages and provides us with an image of one of the engines of emigration.

But the emigrants' most lasting impression was of the "American home," the old house renovated and expanded. Dr. Carslaw of the Foreign Mission of the Church of Scotland observed these improvements in his report of 1894: "Houses were having the old clay roofs taken off, and new roofs of Marseilles tiles put on. . . . Eighteen years ago there was not a tiled roof in the whole district."[51] Nine years later the effect was even more dramatic. In the words of U.S. consul general Ravndal, "A village in the most remote parts of the Lebanon . . . has . . . at least 2 or 3 new houses with tiled roofs and . . . even whole villages have been thus constructed."[52] These blushes of wealth, which could be seen from all over the village and from afar, attracted the attention and excited the imagination of those who had remained in the village and who were still pondering how to secure their future as farmers. Consequently, the tens turned to hundreds, and by the turn of the century they were followed by thousands who left the Mountain every year.

Facilitating the desire to acquire money was the creation of a trodden path to the *mahjar.* By the turn of the century, the adventures and uncertainties of yesteryears were replaced by a network of people that extended from the villages all the way to the cities and towns of the Americas. All along this web information was passed back and forth about work opportunities and travel pitfalls. Word would be sent back about the best way to avoid increasingly strict immigration control in the United States (travel to Mexico and cross overland into Texas), the good and bad hotels along the way, and whom to ask for on arrival in a town. Even impromptu courses in highly abridged English ("thank you," "please," "yes," and "no") were given on the boat to teach these future peddlers the essence of selling trinkets and baubles to middle-class women in the cities and to farmers out on the plains of the United States.[53] While troubles still accompanied the emigrants, these tips helped smooth the trip and convince the reluctant peasant to undertake the immense voyage across the ocean.

Looking for a Husband

Although it solved some problems, this avalanching movement created new ones. As more and more men (through the 1890s) left the villages, unusual things began to happen. Single women were having a difficult time finding husbands, and wives were left behind and alone to contend with a host of new problems. In both cases, the patriarchal contract was being broken.

According to "tradition," or the norms current in the 1880s, girls were supposed to be married before they reached the ripe old age of twenty. Their betrothal was an exercise in weaving families together and not necessarily an outcome of a romantic affair with a beloved. In return for relinquishing control over her future destiny, the young girl expected the men in her immediate and extended family to take the lead roles in the social theater of the engagement and wedding. In other words, she waited for them to arrange the marriage. However, with men leaving the village in unprecedented numbers, the pool of eligible grooms was shrinking in alarming proportions, and the task of marrying off a daughter was growing more difficult.

Exacerbating this dearth of eligible bachelors was the growing uncertainty about cousin-marriage. As long as two paternal cousins shared the same physical space of the village, it was assumed that—barring any unforeseen unpleasantness such as a family feud, death, dismemberment, or what have you—the couple would be married to each other. The ubiquitous nineteenth-century habit of calling one's husband *ibn ʿami* (the son of my paternal uncle) attests to this expectation. But as the young men left behind their cousins, a host of novel factors unsettled "tradition." In "Amirka" most of the emigrant men were exposed, to one extent or another, to a more cosmopolitan life where women were more educated, more "liberated" in their social milieu, and relatively more flamboyant. Such exposure, when coupled with an effervescent mixture of superficial and real sophistication, made the young men "more difficult in their choice . . . [as] they find the young woman of their class lamentably lacking intellectually."[54] Even if we take the word "intellectually" in its looser sense, we still come up against a serious change in the expectations of many emigrant men. After spending the better part of eight to ten years in the *mahjar* struggling for their future, these fellows were no longer satisfied to acquiesce to choices made by their elders, whether it was in matters of acquiring land or of acquiring spouses. Their hard-earned

money and the mystique they acquired as adventurers in the "New World" made them—if not equal to their fathers and uncles—occupy a higher rung in the hierarchy of family power. This elevation meant that in some instances returning emigrants did not marry their paternal cousin or even from within their village for that matter.

We have some figures to prove it. By the 1910s a trend—reflected in marriage records—toward exogamous marriages emerges in Mount Lebanon. In the village of Bsus, for example, only 13 percent of marriages were exogamous between 1873 and 1882, while between 1893 and 1902 the number of exogamous marriages increased to 34 percent.[55] Further north, in Munsif, the percentage of exogamous marriages went from zero between 1860 and 1889 to 12.5 by 1914 and to 33 by 1930.[56] Even in the remote village of Hadeth el-Jobbeh exogamous marriage had taken hold by the beginning of World War I, at which time 11 percent of all marriages were exogamous.[57] When compared with marital trends among Muslims in Lebanon, this shift becomes more pronounced. In the Muslim village of Haouch el-Harimi, 86 percent of the 283 contracted marriages in 1963 were endogamous, and the forty people who did marry someone from outside the village chose their spouses from close locales.[58] Even as late as 1980, 50 percent of Muslim marriages in Lebanon were contracted among cousins, whereas among the Christians this figure was only 22 percent, a trend that had its roots in the historical transformation wrought by emigration.[59]

Emigration and changes in the attitudes of emigrant men made marriage after the 1890s a far more uncertain affair for single peasant women and their families. Families were looking everywhere for spouses for their daughters. As one observer lamented, "Unfortunately in our days [1908], the expatriation to America . . . [has caused] the families of a girl to offer large sums of money to [a prospective] groom, and to renounce their social rank and titles to give their [daughter's] hand to an obscure groom with no money, . . . [who most likely was] much older."[60] An advertisement which appeared in 1895 in the *Lubnan* newspaper, published in Beirut, confirms this small and desperate trend. On the third page of the paper a small notice titled "Beauty and Money" read:

> A young woman who is 22 years old, beautiful looking, educated and cultured according to the latest requirements of the [modern] age, and she possesses a not so modest sum of money, wishes to marry with a man who would be her peer in knowledge and literature, but he does not need to be rich or to come from an exemplary [notable] family, however he must not have surpassed 40 years.[61]

Such advertisements constituted but one of the new, more desperate and "nontraditional" strategies which women and their families had to adopt in order to avoid the unsavory fate of being "preserved in vinegar," as the popular saying recommended for those women who did not get married by the age of twenty.[62] A more promising source of husbands was the *mahjar,* where scores of single men who had supposedly made a fortune were living. Thus, a decade or so after the men began to leave the villages, single women took after them. According to the statistics available to us, the movement of young unmarried women peaked around the turn of the century, when 38.6 percent of women above the age of eighteen arriving in the United States were single.[63] Of course, it would be quite facile to conclude that exploring prospects of marriage was the single motivation behind these young women's excursions. But, in addition to seeking better financial status and escaping village life, seeking marriage partners was definitely one of the main factors pulling the majority of women out of Mount Lebanon.

Married women also had their reasons to leave the Mountain. Some wanted to escape an unhappy marriage, others sought a better financial status, and a few were after adventure, but most went looking for the "family." Perhaps the most famous case of a woman leaving an abusive relationship is that of Kamila Gibran, the mother of Khalil Gibran. Born in the northern village of Bsherri around 1855, Kamila first married Hanna ^{c}Abd al-Salaam Rahmé. Unfortunately, Rahmé died on a trip he had undertaken alone to Brazil to investigate the possibility of emigration. Later she married Khalil Sa^{c}ad Gibran, by whom she had three children: Gibran (born 1883), Marianna (1894 or 1895), and Sultana (1886). By all accounts Khalil was a drunkard and a bully, and Kamila had long resented the poverty he led the family into through his behavior. When he got into trouble with the Ottoman administration for extorting taxes from the peasants and spending some of the collected fees on his own habits, Kamila decided to leave him. She took all her children and emigrated to the United States, arriving in steerage in June 1895.[64]

Some women legitimized their departure from Lebanon and their husbands on the premise of wanting to improve their financial lot. "A woman who was strong and courageous would leave her husband, be absent about 3 to 4 years and come back with $300 or $400. Her family would open a new home and villagers would go and welcome her."[65] Da^{c}ad Fatūh was that kind of woman. In 1884, Da^{c}ad—who was a midwife—departed from her village of al-Munsif and left behind her husband to take care of a son and two-year-old daughter. On disembarking in New Orleans Da^{c}ad had a baby, whom she was forced to place in the care of the Sisters of Mercy—

since she did not know anyone in the city—while she went out peddling. When she came back, she was told that the infant had died. Devastated by this news and confused since she never saw the grave, Da^{c}ad persisted in her attempt to save enough money before going back to Lebanon. We do not know how much money Da^{c}ad saved or whether she built a new home, but we do know that, after returning to Lebanon, she convinced her son to leave for the United States at the age of fifteen and later went back herself for another stint of peddling around Meridian, Mississippi.[66] Najibé Younis was another adventurous soul who was not satisfied with staying poor in Lebanon when she "could gather a fortune" in the Americas. So she too left her village and went even further west than Da^{c}ad had; she worked as a peddler in Billings, Montana. There she catered to prostitutes, "who were the kindest women" and who bought from her the "nice" things she was selling, such as linens, lace, silk, and other fabrics. Only after two years of peddling in Wyoming and Montana, when she had saved $3,000 in addition to the money she sent to her husband in Lebanon, did Najibé rejoin her husband in Lebanon in 1906.[67]

However, these examples remain few in number. From the letters, interviews, and other information we have available to us, most women do not appear to have been escaping a bad relationship or to have set off on lonely journeys to better their financial status. Without knowing exact numbers, we can still state that the majority seem to have been catching up to husbands who had left them behind. It is not overly difficult to imagine why. Those women who stayed behind while their husbands had emigrated to the Americas grappled with a new set of problems and challenges. In the absence of their husbands, they were suddenly and visibly thrust into the leadership of the family and were responsible for its economic viability and social cohesion. At the most basic level, they had to make sure that they and their children survived despite the loss of a major source of labor, their husbands, and of their savings, which were used up in sending the men overseas. More often than not, little money was sent back by the emigrant men in the first few years, and that which was sent was intended mainly for buying up property in the man's name. Of equal importance, these women became internally and externally the central focus of the family. From the outside, they had to deal with matters that were usually considered "male" territory, such as water rights, conflict over land borders, the sale of the silk crop, and vigilant maintenance of the "honor" of the family. On the inside, the women emerged as the apparent and ultimate decision makers in matters ranging from the mundane—where to plant the tomatoes—to the all-important, such as whether to accept the marriage proposal for a daughter or whether to invest in an expansion of the house.[68]

On a daily basis, then, women entered the "male" domain by necessity, and for that they were constantly challenged. Brothers-in-law attempted to infringe on their property, sons tried to reject their decisions, fathers-in-law questioned their morality, and even other women publicly resented their new measure of power by insinuations and gossip. While waiting for her husband to send her money with which to make the Atlantic crossing, Skiyyé Samaha had to contend with living with his aunt and with spiteful talk. "The neighbors would gossip—'look at her how she's always pretty dressed and making herself look nice.' They were jealous, and I was very unhappy." Skiyyé could not stand the insinuations in looks and words and begged her husband's aunt to let her leave for the United States. When the aunt persistently declined, Skiyyé began to pen letters in her husband's name in which she would indicate "his" strong desire for his wife to join him with the children. Week after week she wrote stronger and stronger letters and diligently went the post office to "collect" them and show them to her husband's aunt. Her campaign finally paid off, and she was able to rejoin her husband.[69]

After a long day tangling with these social burs, these women had to face the night alone, wondering about their husbands. "What is he doing? Who is he with? Is he ever coming back? Could it be that he had forgotten us? Does he not care about our misery?" Sad stories about women abandoned by their husbands intensified that anxiety. *Al-Mashriq,* a Jesuit magazine, published many short moral stories about this situation. In one such story, greed drove a man named ᶜAbd Allah to leave the village for New York. In a scene where he is telling the village's priest of his decision the following conversation takes place:

The priest sighed and asked him [ᶜAbd Allah]:

— Are you traveling by yourself or are you taking your family?

— No, I am traveling by myself, father.

— This is an act not worthy of true Christians. How can you leave your wife and little ones without any support or assistan[ce]?

— I leave them to God until I return to them after one or two years.

— This is something we have heard of many others like you and here it is many years after and they are still away from their country. . . .

Nine years later, ᶜAbd Allah was still in the US and the little money that he used to send had dried up.[70]

Infrequent letters and rumors snowballing their way from the *mahjar* to the village only inflated such stories to nightmarish proportions and left many women wondering about their future.

All this anxiety was exhausting in a way that was not customary. Women, and men, had for the most part accepted marriage as an essential part of their lives. It would have been hard not to given such emphatic sayings as "It is better for a woman to marry a piece of wood than to remain an old maid in her father's house"[71] or a man "who did not beget [hence was not married] did not live."[72] However, marriage—as proscribed socially and imagined ideologically—was meant to entail a set of mutual responsibilities and guarantees. As the woman was supposed to take a public secondary role to the man, he was required to provide sustenance and protection. Under the new circumstances of the 1890s, this gendered division of labor, which was one of the main pillars of the patriarchal society, existed no longer. Its failure must have brought to the forefront of the minds and conversations of many women a searching question about the purpose of being married in the first place.

Although some did come to the conclusion that marriage was simply not worth all the heartaches, few could afford to follow the logic of this answer by leaving their husbands. Several structural problems stood in the way. For Lebanese Christian women, divorce was a legal labyrinth and a social taboo. Overseen by male-dominated churches, personal-status laws in Mount Lebanon discouraged divorce under most circumstances and were particularly opaque when it came to women's rights in this matter. Maronite women were even worse off in these instances: divorce was simply not permissible. Even if we leave the legal morass aside for a moment, we still come up against economic realities. Most married women had nothing to their name but their dowry. They had no land, as Christian women were disinherited; the house and its furniture belonged to their fathers or husbands; and they certainly had little money. About all that they owned was worn around their wrists (gold bracelets) or head (scarves with coins sewed into them). Lastly, if a woman managed to circumvent all of these obstacles, she would have had to go someplace away from the village, either to a neighboring one or clear out of the Mountain. Villages near or far were not known to allow "unattached" women to move into the community; a man had to be around. Crossing the seas, while possible, was an eminently difficult trek to undertake alone with little money or support. In this context, it would appear to be a singularly remarkable act of courage and determination for any woman to leave her husband.

A far more common resolution of this multifaceted crisis in "patriarchy" was for the women to either join their husbands in the *mahjar* or go find one there. So it was that between 1899 and 1914 close to half the total number of Lebanese immigrants to the United States—or 72,605—

were women.[73] Other emigrant destinations received a variable number of women between 1880 and 1914: in Australia there were three women arriving for every four men, two out of ten immigrants to Argentina were women, and 41 percent of the Lebanese arriving in Brazil were women.[74] These numbers are all the more dramatic when one considers that not a single Druze woman left Lebanon before the 1920s. Cultural and religious differences cannot account for this discrepancy in emigration experience since before 1860—and even as late as the 1880s—Druze and Maronite communities shared many common cultural elements. The main variation in the histories of both communities stems from the fact that the Druze community remained outside the market economy being constructed in the Mountain. Consequently, the patriarchal structure of the Druze community was not subjected to the same critical pressures of female employment or male emigration.[75] It was mainly Lebanese Christian women, then, who struggled against the impact of the silk industry by adopting new tactics for marriage and by trying to maintain the family system that defined their social roles as individuals.

Conclusion

Emigration, which deprived Lebanon of at least a third of its population, was not the result of poverty or persecution. Men left the Mountain in search of a way to guarantee, and possibly improve on, a standard living they had grown accustomed to during the good times of the 1860s. Yet, their quest for stability for themselves and their families brought about a larger degree of social upheaval. No one felt this disjunction more than the women they left behind: their sisters, mothers, daughters, and wives. Social stigma, worrisome thoughts, and a crushing load of work weighed down the minds and bodies of these women. Some tolerated their hardships in silence, but many more refused to shoulder these burdens alone. Thus, they went after their husbands or—if they were not married—went to the Americas in search of one. Their goal was to recapture a social stability that they were promised and could still remember. Ironically, their search for stability amidst the upheaval of the late nineteenth century only brought about more changes that neither they nor the men in their lives could have anticipated.

4

The *Mahjar*

There are many [female] qashé sellers who are chaste in soul and body, . . . and they may be forced to sell either because of poverty or because they have no one to support them, [or] because they have someone they have to support and he is like the useless beast.
—ᶜAfifa Karam, *al-Huda,* 14 July 1903

Regardless of the reasons which prompted men and women to leave Mount Lebanon for "Amirka," few thought they would stay long. They expected to land somewhere, work for a while to gather money, and return home to live the good life. Focused as they were on these straightforward goals, only the most clairvoyant among the emigrants could have anticipated that the voyage would be far more complex. Even fewer could have foretold that the days spent peddling lace and buttons, shopping for food and clothes, and strolling in the streets of their adopted communities would be transformative. Almost none would have expected that their experiences in the *mahjar* would entail social and cultural contacts that necessitated a self-conscious examination of their individual and collective identities.

Yet, all these things did happen. Emigrants from Mount Lebanon arrived in the United States at a time when a predominantly white, Anglo-Saxon, and protestant middle class was ascendant. Through a cult of domesticity, hierarchical notions of race and ethnicity, and physical distance from the working classes and cities, members of this class had come to ascribe to themselves a positivist "modernity." As the members of this

class became more isolated from the tumult of the cities in their suburban retreats, they grew increasingly suspicious of and alienated from social and ethnic groups that they deemed "foreign," including immigrants. Directly—through "philanthropic" works and public schooling—and indirectly—through their insistence that they represented the nation—this middle class projected disdain and patronizing attitudes toward immigrants. Thus, Lebanese emigrants came to be regarded as part of an "East" depicted as irrational, emotional, unclean, and suspicious by a hegemonic middle-class culture. In this manner, the world came to be neatly and absurdly divided into two irreconcilable categories of "us" and "them." Such a dichotomy forced immigrants to articulate and defend a sense of self in the midst of a larger society that contradictorily sought to "Americanize" them while shunning them.

But there was not a single overriding notion of what that "self" was. Opinions ranged widely between those few who sought to emulate the middle-class United States in every facet, and those who considered any departure from "tradition" a disaster. This effort—carried out as it was in community newspapers and private conversations—left little untouched. At the intersection of many of these inquiries was the family: a microcosm of gender roles and social relations. Inside and outside the physical house, people argued, got upset, compromised, and stomped off in the search for a surety that they thought they had with regard to marriage, parenting, women's work, and other defining social traditions. Out of these processes emerged a tentative new class with a hybrid cultural ideology and social structure which challenged the very precept of "modern" and "traditional," "East" and "West." It is to this dialectic process that we now turn.

Making Money

After surviving the jitters induced by immigration officials at Montevideo in Uruguay or Ellis Island in New York, the immigrants were eager to find a compatriot or relative to help them. They needed a place to stay, food, and work. Shortly after arriving in their new communities, immigrants sought someone to supply them with items to peddle (buttons and lace, thread and needles, crosses and mementos from the "Holy Land"), point them to a job, and generally teach them the ropes. Some sought out relatives. Michel Haddy recalled arriving in New York with his brother on the 4th of July, 1895, just in time to see the dec-

orations (including "Uncle Sam") and watch the fireworks. A few days later they boarded a train to Bloomington, Illinois, to search for a brother-in-law who "had opened up a store in the country."[1] Two years before Michel Haddy arrived in the United States, Skiyyé Samaha had traveled with her father "straight" to Toronto to seek out her uncle, who had been peddling there for a while.[2] Upon arriving in New York in 1893, Kamila Gibran took her children—including Khalil—directly to the Syrian quarter in the South End of Boston, where cousins and more distant relatives had settled a few years before.[3] And there are many other examples of family migrations from Mount Lebanon to the Americas.

Either back in Lebanon or while crossing the Atlantic, some emigrants heard of a person to look for. In 1890 Assaf Khater left his wife, Malakeh, and their three children in the village of Lehfed; he wanted to make some money because his work in the gendarmerie was proving frustrating socially and unsatisfying financially. While he was waiting in Marseilles for the next boat to "Amirka," some Lebanese emigrants asked him to join them on their trip to Uruguay. En route, one of the emigrants, who was making his second trip overseas, told stories of what to expect there. Thrown in amidst the wildly imaginative descriptions of "jungles" and "Indians" was advice to seek out the Skaff family in Montevideo, the capital of Uruguay. Well established there since the early 1880s, the Skaff family, this fellow traveler said, could help immigrants get started on their journey to wealth. Sure enough, on disembarking at the port in Montevideo, Assaf made his way to this family, which outfitted him—on credit—with a *qashé* (peddling valise) filled with *baratijas* (bric-à-brac like safety pins and combs) and a few words of Spanish like "Vendo barato. Tuto a veinti." ("I sell cheaply. Everything for twenty cents.")[4] Soon thereafter he was on his way, selling trinkets to make a living.[5]

In Fort Wayne, Indiana, Salem Beshara became well known to immigrants from Lebanon as a man who would find them a place to stay and a job to earn money. As Michel Haddy tells it,

> All who came [to the United States from Rachaya—a town in southern Lebanon] would say "I am going to my Uncle Salem Beshara in Ft. Wayne, Indiana." There was Druze man with us, and when Mr. Arbeely [the interpreter for immigration officials at Ellis Island] asked who he was going to meet, he said "my uncle Salem Beshara." Mr. Arbeely said, "how is it that a Druze is related to a Christian?!" But he let us through anyway because he knew who Salem was.[6]

Another measure of Beshara's popularity is found in the registry of baptisms at the Catholic cathedral in Fort Wayne. Tafeda Beshara, who went

in there once to look up a birth certificate, exclaimed to her interviewer, "And so help me, if he [Salem Beshara] was a godfather to one, it must have been twenty-five that I saw [in records covering just few years]."[7] Many other suppliers came to play this same patriarchal role. Daher Hobaica in Utica, New York, Tom Beshara in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and a Mr. Uthman were all "supplier, banker, protector and provider" for immigrant peddlers within their respective communities.[8]

Other immigrants arrived without a clue about whom to contact. For those, Washington Street in New York City or the *barrio de los Turcos* in Buenos Aires provided commercial and cultural ports of entry into the *mahjar*.[9] There they found a place to stay, familiar foods, suppliers of goods, and guides for the first few days or weeks peddling their wares. At Ellis Island, hotel agents barely waited for Alice Abraham and her companions to be "examined under the electricity for . . . [the] eyes" and to answer the immigration officials' questions through an Arabic interpreter before descending on them with offers of places to stay.[10] After eighteen days at sea, sailing from Marseilles to New York, the seventy-two villagers from ᶜAyn ᶜArab were welcomed into the folds of (the same?) hotel agent, who "took money from each of us. So we went and stayed in his hotel."[11] Shortly thereafter they would be absorbed into the transplanted Lebanese community. As one *New York Daily Tribune* reporter observed, these immigrants moved out of the hotel and into crammed boarding houses "as at least sixty per cent of the men either have no families or have left them behind in Syria; . . . [even] families who are here [permanently] find their homes utilized as headquarters by those who are not yet settled."[12]

Regardless of whether they were venturing alone or seeking out a relative, immigrants (more often than not) needed work. They found employment in a wide range of jobs stretching from homesteading in South Dakota to selling life-insurance policies in Buenos Aires. However, the majority appears to have taken one of two paths to making money: commerce or factory work. In a survey conducted around 1902, Lucius Hopkins Miller found that a little over a quarter of the Lebanese immigrant population living in New York City was engaged in industrial factory work. Slightly over half of the same population traded in goods either from a store or from a *qashé*.[13] Numbers from Argentina portray a similar spread in occupational activities. Using statistics published by the contemporary Lebanese press, Ignacio Klich notes that 53.3 percent of the population in Argentina worked in either the sedentary or the itinerant form of commerce, and factory workers made up another 17 percent of

that population. (The advanced stage of industrialization in the United States—as compared with that in Argentina—may account for the difference in the numbers of Lebanese immigrant factory workers in the two countries).[14] In both cases (New York and Argentina) there seems to have been little interest in agricultural activities of any kind. But, then, this is hardly surprising given the permanent residential nature of farming, which would not have fit the itinerant goals of most immigrants, who had every intention of going back to Lebanon after accumulating enough money. As a result, peddling and—to a lesser extent—factory work were the favored "callings" of the Lebanese immigrant.

A large number of immigrants took up peddling, at least for the first few years of their lives in the *mahjar.* Going door to door selling trinkets and baubles, dresses and combs had much to recommend it to the emigrant from Mount Lebanon. This type of work did not require a great deal of capital, training, or skill. In the words of one disparaging Argentine commentator, "A peddler needs no capital to begin to trade. He [or she] always finds some merchandise . . . on credit. He [or she] generally succeeds in selling his [or her] goods . . . at [a] price that is 10–15 times higher than the object's real value."[15] In more positive terms, a Lebanese woman—who had emigrated to Vicksburg, Mississippi, in 1908—explained her interest in peddling to one inquirer: "Believe me, during the first Christmas season I made $500."[16] But quick money was not the only attraction. Coming from a peasant background, immigrants were less inclined to work in an industrialized setting that was alien in its dehumanizing rhythm of labor, dark and enclosed environment, and impersonal culture.[17] And having declined work in the silk factories of Mount Lebanon as dishonorable, they certainly would not have arrived in the *mahjar* with the intention of joining the assembly lines of American industries, even if some ended up there eventually. Lastly, following in the footsteps of previous immigrants, who had made their money by peddling wares, was much easier than striking out into new, uncharted employment territory.

For all these reasons the *qashé* became the hallmark of Lebanese immigration to the Americas.[18] Starting out as novices in this trade, new immigrants needed some training. For a couple of days or even weeks, they traveled with someone who had had experience enticing customers to purchase a few cents' or dollars' worth of merchandise. Sometimes it was a relative. Michel Haddy was trained by his cousin, and when Skiyyé Samaha first came with her father to Canada (1893) she went out peddling with her aunt. "I was so young, I started to cry. I cried all the

time."[19] At other times newcomers went with veterans of the trade they had met at a supplier's shop. "They [the veterans] would find hotels, teach . . . [the newcomers] routes, and guide them in other ways. And, the owners of the stores would give . . . [the veterans] five percent of whatever the newcomers bought from the storeowner."[20] In his memoirs, Faris Naoum reminisced that he trained six newly arrived immigrants and received a 6 percent commission on merchandise purchased from Salem Beshara.[21]

Among the first things these "greenhorns" learned were the stock phrases of the trade: "Buy sumthin', ya [oh] laydee." Sometimes the women would add a sing-song rhythm to the appeal replete with (a slightly exaggerated?) drama of existence. Mary Matti had her favorite:

> Qadmi, qadmi, ya Mrs., Qadmi
> [Approach, approach, Mrs., approach]
> Buy sumthin', father dead fil blad [in the old country]
> Buy for shoes, lil awlad [for the children] [22]

Other phrases that they acquired helped explain their hunger or their need for a place to stay. But beyond these few verbal bridges to American society, communication for this first generation of emigrants remained difficult. One woman who was peddling wanted to know what time her train was coming. "She began to motion to a man and make a sound like a puffing train—boo, boo, boo, tûm [time]—He couldn't understand her; . . . finally she turned to him in anger and said in Arabic: you are as dumb as a donkey, don't you understand?"[23] Another young peddler, mistaking a customer's response ("I'm busy") for the Lebanese feminine imperative (*qanbzi,* or squat), sat down on her haunches until another peddler rescued her from her most uncomfortable position.[24]

Beyond the frustrations of language lay the intricacies of American currency, the art of packing a suitcase just one button below its explosive threshold, and the skills needed to capture the eyes of wary customers. The tutor of Mary Amyuni told her to "hold up the rosaries and crosses first; say they are from the Holy Land because Americans are very religious."[25] But perhaps the most crucial business lesson was on how to make a profit. Watfa Massoud was told, "If you buy a dress for $10, sell it for $20 and take $10 from the customer first before giving her the dress. Then, if she wants credit, give it to her; but always get your cost first."[26] Such profit margins were mostly attainable in the countryside, where farmers had little access to stores and dry goods. There, the novice would quickly learn, lace bought for 5 cents a yard could be sold for 15, and holy

pictures which cost 10 cents should be offered for a dollar.[27] In the city, competition and experienced hagglers drove the profit margins lower. One peddler, responding to an inquiry by the U.S. Pushcart Commission of Greater New York, stated that like his fellow traders he asked for the highest price possible because "if we ask a woman for half a dollar, she gives you fifteen cents, and if you ask for fifteen, she gives you three."[28]

Taking lessons from veteran peddlers was not always helpful in a straightforward fashion. After a particularly difficult day of peddling, Nasim Samaha came back complaining to an experienced woman peddler that all the other peddlers were having doors opened to them but not he. She said to him:

> You are not speaking to them in the Rachaya [town in Lebanon] accent, are you? What an ass you are! Talk to them in a Damascene accent. So he went out the next day and began using the Damascene accent, and tried to act appropriately refined to match it. He held up a pair of earrings [for a woman customer] and began to swing them back and forth, speaking all the while in the sing-sing intonation of the Damascene accent and finally put them to her ears. She picked up a broom and swatted him with it and chased him away.[29]

A novice woman peddler learned about using customers' bathrooms the hard way. On her first trip out, her companion told her, as a prank, " 'Don't say you want to go to the toilet; it will cost you $5 for each time.' So all day she peddled, and although the need arose she didn't ask any of her customers to use the bathroom for fear of paying $5. Finally she got desperate and went back to her partner begging. He told her he'd arrange it with the next customer. He did and told her to give him the $5, . . . which he kept and used to buy his friends drinks that evening as he told the story of his prank to all who would listen, . . . including the poor woman!"[30]

Along with the serious and humorous lessons came the quick realization that it was not easy to make money. Life on the road (whether bustling city streets or lonely rural lanes) was filled with challenges. In the cities immigrants had to contend with the police and with collecting from customers. In the countryside, there was the ever-present concern about finding a place to bed for the night and food to quiet rumbling stomachs. Everywhere, there was pressure to make money. (In case the immigrants had forgotten the purpose of their trip to the Americas, letters from home—with requests for money, inquiries about profits, and so forth—jogged their memory.) Immigrants talked of frozen feet, hands, and noses, of women's frozen skirts slashing cold ankles, and of begging

for a room or stable in which to stay. On one of his peddling trips, Faris Naoum was accompanied by a fellow villager's wife. One night, he wrote:

> When I asked for sleep and said she was my wife, they would not believe me. [She was forty-five and he was twenty at the time]. When they would see her they would not give us accommodations. We continued walking until we reached a small town. There was in it not a hall or a boardinghouse. We had left the town about one mile when I saw . . . a small building. I jumped the fence; . . . it had windows and a round door which was closed. I opened my kashshi [*qashé*] and I used scissors, No. 9, [to open the window] and we entered. We saw two cases. . . . From our fatigue we did not see the graves. . . . Then the moon came out. The woman looked outside and cried out, . . . "We are sleeping in a mausoleum and the dead are beneath us in the boxes!!!"[31]

On top of all these problems was the simple fact that there was no gold to be shoveled off the streets of American cities. Even if most immigrants did not believe in such fairy tales, many did have great expectations for the fortunes to be made in the "New World." A few did indeed make large sums of money in short periods of time. One immigrant had amassed a fortune amounting to $70,000 in 1910, or some twenty-five years after his arrival in New York; another had opened a glove factory in Gloversville, New York, which sold $400,000 worth of goods in one year alone.[32] But for most the economic reality was not quite so rosy. It is quite difficult to generalize about annual incomes of peddlers since that depended on a host of subjective and objective factors. Anything from the price of Midwestern corn in the United States to the talents of the individual peddler would cause a fluctuation in income. And a severe winter would easily reduce the profits of peddlers by limiting their sales. Still, from the notes of various contemporary observers, we can surmise some figures. Writing in 1911, Louise Houghton estimated the average annual income of peddlers to "vary from $200 to $1,500 a year."[33] Miller ventured a guess—because "very few of the peddlers could [would?] give a correct estimate of the average amount of their monthly earnings"—of "perhaps $10 to $12 a week [of gross income from] industrious peddling."[34] A quick calculation produces an annual income of about $450, if we assume that for at least a few weeks the peddler could not (for any number of reasons from illness to cold weather) knock on doors. Work in factories generated even lower incomes for the Lebanese immigrants. Essa Samaha, who had emigrated to Worcester, Massachusetts, around 1900, earned $3.55 per week at a factory.[35] Latifa Khoury began working in a glass factory when she was only fourteen years old. She wiped

glasses for about one year, earning a little over $2 in weekly wages.[36] In later years workers in "heavy industries" like the Ford automobile factory would earn higher wages, ranging from $5 to as much as $12 per week.

Working Women

Regardless of the type of work immigrants engaged in, their annual incomes were hardly as large as the ones they had daydreamed about in Lebanon. So, how did they send back to Lebanon $300 and $400 checks every six months?[37] The answer to this question has two parts: emigrants were extremely frugal, and each family had more than one breadwinner. For many years emigrants hung on to conservative notions of the subsistence economy, which they had grown up with in the villages of the Mountain. It took quite a while for these peasants to make forays into the consumer society as it was emerging in the big cities of America. And when they did, it was a quick dash to test the waters before retreating for fear of being swallowed up by the dizzying eddies and currents of "modernity." Joining the flow—if they ever did—was indeed a slow process.

They were never quite comfortable paying for shelter, buying a variety of clothes, and eating extravagant amounts of meat. Faced with the abhorrent novelty of paying large sums of money for rent, immigrants balked. If they could not refuse, then at least they could lessen this constant drain by crowding together in small apartments. In the cities of the United States, Brazil, and Argentina, immigrants chose to begin their sojourn in "dark and dank" quarters. Counting immigrant families and apartments in New York City, one observer found that over 70 percent of the "families" lived in apartments that rented for less than $14 per month and that were made up of two rooms or even one.[38] One of the rooms might receive sunlight, but more often than not the apartment's window looked away from the street into an internal yard. On average, the same observer calculated methodically, four to five people lived in these apartments. Sleeping under those conditions meant spreading mattresses across the whole floor. The "scientific" tone of these characterizations becomes slightly more impassioned when the report states, "The number of baths in the Syrian homes . . . can be counted on the fingers of one hand, and there are very few private closets, . . . many [of which] are constructed in the illegal sink fashion."[39] Taking baths "on Saturdays"

meant setting a galvanized steel tub in the middle of the kitchen and having relatives and neighbors swirling around the lone bather. In winter the discomfort was accentuated by the bitter cold, which was barely staved off by a single wood- or coal-burning stove. (Piped heat was a luxury only those paying upward of $360 in annual rent in 1909 could afford.)[40]

In outlying areas, crowding was even worse. In an article entitled (in a straightforward racist fashion) "Don't Like Arabs," which appeared in the July 16, 1901, issue of the *Cedar Rapids Evening Gazette,* neighbors complained of "the deportment of fifty Arabians who represent the colony [of Lebanese immigrants] living in a building . . . at 1220 South Third Street."[41] The building included only two apartments and a store below them, so living conditions were dense. In Spring Valley, Illinois, the story was the same. Recalling the "time of the emigrants," the daughters of George Abdelnour described the peddlers' house on Minnesota Street. "It was used by all the peddlers when they were in town. It had one kitchen and often about two dozens at a time—both men and women, husbands and wives, single men and single women—slept there on the floor, two or three families in one room. A man and his wife maybe partitioned off with a drape or something."[42] Squeezing together for warmth and frugality was also common among immigrants in Fort Wayne, Indiana. By sleeping ten, twelve, or even twenty "souls" to a room in the "hotel" of Salem Beshara, emigrants limited their rent to $5 or $10 a month.[43]

Cramming into an apartment meant that there were "strangers" in the midst of "families." Boarders were a necessary part of the formula for cutting costs. Many families took in boarders because the dollar or two they paid reduced rent costs by 10 to 20 percent. For those desperate to save money, this reduction in costs was nothing to scoff at. Out of a total population of 1,891 immigrants in Brooklyn in 1904, some 464 were boarders, men and women who were not directly related to the family with whom they were staying.[44] Living cheek by jowl limited the social privacy of families. Coming from a society that was suspicious of admitting "strangers" into the physical spaces of the "family" for fear of a *fadiha* (scandal with sexual overtones), a family that took in boarders added significantly to their social stresses. How were parents to keep the "honor" of their daughters from being sullied by rumors and innuendoes? How was a husband to guarantee that nothing unseemly would transpire between his wife and a boarder? These were difficult questions, not easily answered given the financial realities. For most immigrants, the answer was simply to accept increased interaction between men and women

either on the road or at home. Yet, as we will see later in this chapter, some observers were not quite so accepting of this interaction, especially since it "tarnished" the image of "Syrians" from the perspective of the American middle class.

Having a great number of people tromp through an apartment or house not only was socially inconvenient but also made for more work. Someone had to clean up the constant mess. And staying "clean" in America was inherently more difficult than it was in the old country because, as one Sicilian woman exclaimed, "We had no blinds, no curtains and the floors were all made of stone. You have no idea how simple life was over there."[45] This could have easily been the sentiment of a Lebanese immigrant as both cultures shared much in peasant background and early immigrant experiences. Within the city, chores became more intense and regular than they were in the country. City grime assured the need for more clothes and more washing. Instead of going to the local village stream once a month to do the wash, immigrant women had to launder the family's clothes every week in the kitchens of their apartments.

Cooking was no less a hassle. For starters, the usual foodstuffs were not always available. Trying to cook *kibbé* in the "New World" became a logistical nightmare of importing the heavy stone mortar and pestle, buying bulgur wheat, locating lamb meat, and finding all the necessary spices. Even when such items could be found in the larger Lebanese communities, the task of cooking became more cumbersome because it was a lonelier experience. When she was bound within the kitchen of an apartment, the "housewife" found that cooking elaborate meals became less of a social event and more of an isolated chore. Even if we do not exaggerate the extent or immediacy of this change (women and men continued gathering in kitchens to talk and work together), the shift was palpable to the immigrants. Children—who would be helping their mother in the village—were now in school or working. Other women who would have come calling in the village homes were themselves either working outside or inside their own homes. Even the mother, wife, or sister who was expected to do the cooking was herself working eight- to ten-hour days trying to bring in money.

All of these people worked because frugality could go only so far. It was quickly evident to many immigrants that everyone who could had to work outside the house in order to make ends meet. Almost every adult had to walk miles, stand for many hours, or sew late into the night just to make a living. Women were no exception. In droves they left the "house" and went into the "public" spaces to make money. Although we

do not know the exact numbers of women who worked at peddling or other jobs, we can estimate that it was a majority. In New York, for example, we know that officially 38.1 percent of immigrant Lebanese women worked either peddling or in a factory.[46] Further south the numbers were smaller but not by much. Klich estimated that in Argentina somewhere around a fifth of the women worked alongside their husbands, and Clark Knowlton dismissed immigrant women's work as minimal in Brazil by noting that only a quarter worked.[47] In fact, it is quite certain that immigrant women worked at earning money in far larger numbers, albeit in ways hidden from the eyes of male observers. Based on interviews with immigrants in the United States, Alexa Naff contends that anywhere between "75 and 80 percent of the women peddled during the pioneer years [1880s–1910]."[48] Even women who never peddled or who left that job worked in other venues. Many helped in family stores or sewed items at home that were later sold by a male relative, and some even worked as servants in the houses of rich immigrants. Informally, women took in boarders, cleaned and cooked, and contributed a modicum of order in a chaotic world and time. That alone was of immense—albeit nonmonetary—value to the whole family.

Going back to the "tangible," we find many testimonials to the long and hard work of women so that their families (in the *mahjar* or back home) could survive. In the words of one descendant of immigrants, "Women weren't afraid and were strong and even women up to 70 years of age peddled."[49] Budelia Malooley recounted how "Mother arrived and started to peddle in Spring Valley, . . . must have been in her mid-teens at the time. She resumed peddling on her return to Spring Valley from Lebanon after my father died and I was born [about the first part of 1904]. She'd make $5 to $10/week. She'd have to send money back to Rachaya to support my sister and brother."[50] Women were drawn to peddling for several reasons. Primarily, and as noted above, most families would not have attained their financial goals without the work of women. But at other times women had no option but to work as they were the sole or main "breadwinners." For Sultana al-Khazin, work was a necessity of survival for her and her children. Sultana traveled to Philadelphia in 1901 to join her husband. However, on arrival, she discovered, much to her dismay, that he was living with another woman named Nazira. His plan was for all of them to live together in the same house as one family. Sultana was not quite so cavalier—to say the least—in her approach to marriage, so she packed up the three children and moved out on her own. Soon she was selling linens door to door.[51] Some women lost their husbands not

to infidelity but to death. They, equally, had to contend with raising a family on their own. Alice Assaley was widowed when she was only in her twenties. In order to raise her son and daughter without her husband or any other male relatives, Alice worked first as a janitor and later as a peddler in Springfield, Illinois.[52]

Houghton remarked on another reason for women's work while discussing the misguided attempts of U.S. social workers to induce "Syrian" women to abandon peddling for more "honorable and lady-like" pursuits. Rhetorically she asked, "Why should she [an immigrant] give up the open air, the broad sky, the song of the birds, the smile of flowers, the right to work and rest at her own pleasure to immure herself within four noisy walls and be subject to the strict regime of the clock?"[53] Of course, one must take the pastoral bit about "song of the birds" and "smile of flowers" with an immense grain of salt; life on the road was hardly this romantic. However, hidden amidst the flowery language is a good deal of common sense and truth. Peddling for some women was not only a necessity but an escape.

Mayme Faris vividly remembers arguments between her father and mother about her mother's peddling.

> My mother peddled when my father had the [supply] store. It was a controversy between them; he didn't like her to; he didn't like her independence. She wanted more for them. She worked hard; two or three days after my sisters were born, she would be up washing and not long after that she'd take her stuff and peddle. Once my father got mad and destroyed her satchel—in front of the other peddlers and the women who lived around there too. No, she wasn't disgraced. . . . She stopped it for a while and when she felt they needed more money, she would go. But independence was a big thing in their [women's] lives.[54]

Sophia Mussallem was equally persistent and restless in seeking financial independence. Starting in 1885, when she first immigrated to the United States at the age of fourteen, she worked. From Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to Green Bay and Watertown, then across to the Oklahoma Territory, she peddled all the way to Muskogee. Throughout her expeditions she stashed away money to fulfill the dream of owning a store, which she finally accomplished in Muskogee.[55] And Oscar Alwan's mother made more money as a peddler than did his father. "She was a strong woman. . . . She was never afraid, people [in upstate New York] loved her and waited for her to arrive. She knew how to deal with people, she was a good saleswoman."[56]

Of course, not all enjoyed this "freedom"; for some it was a burden more than anything else.

> [In Toronto,] there was a girl from Rachaya who peddled and it was cold and the snow would come to her waist and she'd have to walk from door to door, street to street. It was very difficult in those days. One day she despaired. She took her suitcases and angrily threw them aside saying "ah, when will I be rid of you, you qashé. When?" A Lady nearby asked her "what's the matter?" she answered nothing and sighed heavily. This lady turned out to be Arab—she asked the peddler in Arabic: "Are you an Arab?" She answered: "yes." The helpful lady said in Arabic, "If I find you a husband will you marry him?" The girl answered yes, find me one. I will marry anyone so I can finish with this qashé and from peddling. The lady found her a man and the girl married him and was happy with him.[57]

While sounding like a variation on the story of Cinderella, this tale embodies the frustrations some women must have felt with the hard life they encountered in the *mahjar.* Hauling on their backs for mile after mile satchels weighing twenty-five or fifty pounds was exhausting. Knocking on doors and struggling with hand gestures and broken English to make a sale was agonizing and humiliating at times. This frustration occurred because the context of labor had changed in the crossing of the Atlantic. While in the village most people worked and lived in similar ways, the same was not the case in the *mahjar.* There the gap between rich and poor was far more glaring, especially to immigrant women who knocked on middle-class doors all day long. The suspicious or pitying looks they received only added mental burdens to their physical labor. In comparison with the elaborate entryways and wallpaper that decorated middle-class homes, the tenement housing to which they returned every evening must have been depressing. And even if many of these women were strong, they tired of the routine of working all day only to come home and work half the night.

It should be obvious by now, from all the "althoughs" and "whiles" that are sprinkled throughout the preceding paragraphs, that the experience of immigrant women varied considerably. Their desire for work as well as their need and reasons for employment were hardly uniform. But the fact that they all worked, at one time or another, outside the "house" is the common thread running through their varying experiences. Abandoning the "private" space of the house and sallying forth on a daily basis into the "public" world of city streets was a new experience for most of these women. It was made even more so by the fact that these spaces were being divided by gender in U.S. society even as they arrived at Ellis

Island. Social workers and the burgeoning middle class of the United States did not expect women—the repository of morality in society—to work in the sullied world outside the home.[58] Thus, these women not only were transgressing their "imported" gender boundaries but also were also trampling—as it were—across the terrain of a middle-class world rising all around them. Their work—born of economic necessity and individual desire—was implicitly and explicitly questioning both the "traditional" and the "modern" notion of women's role in society. Equally, the crisscrossing between "private" and "public" spaces was wreaking havoc on the lines that were being drawn between the two by the emerging middle class. Altogether, then, immigrant women were challenging the simplifying division of the world surrounding them, making the ideas of "modern" and "traditional" largely irrelevant and presenting an alternative notion of "America."

Finding Community

Directly and indirectly, the middle class responded by seeking to "civilize" the immigrants even as it shunned them.[59] In the words of one social worker, "Old standards must be changed if we are sincere in our desire to attain a higher form of civilization. The strangers from across the water must be taught to discard un-American habits and conventions, and to accept new ideals."[60] Or as M. A. Howe wrote in 1903, "To cope with these new conditions [the influx of immigrants] the same efforts are being made in Boston as elsewhere in America. The attempt to amalgamate the diverse elements into a common citizenship goes forward through hundreds of agencies—the public schools, the social settlements, the organization of charities, secular and religious, designed to meet every conceivable need of the unfortunate, but in such a way as to create citizens instead of paupers."[61] Immigrants could not be allowed to hover indeterminately between the "modern" and "traditional," for such a position would expose the absurdity of these ideal types and their irrelevance as either historical devices or symbols of the present world. Immigrants were expected to choose, and to choose to be "American."

This was not a vague and diffused sense of citizenship. Rather, most social workers attempted to universalize "modern" middle-class life.[62] Domesticity for women, leisured children, and working fathers were the norms of the middle class. These same values were projected as the ideal

to which immigrants must aspire because it was culturally "superior." Such sentiments were not the reserve only of conservatives—who were more likely to demand the deportation of immigrants—but were the primary goal of the more liberal of the "settlement houses." As one writer noted in *The Survey*, a progressive social-reform magazine: "The social and moral life of a smaller family where the father earns enough to support wife and children, and where the mother can devote her time to the care of them, and where neither she nor the children go out and help in the support of the family, is superior to that of a family with a large number of children where the wife and often the older children must slave."[63] Ethnically, settlement workers also shared the chauvinism—if not the fears—of the larger middle class. For instance, in *Americans in Process,* a study issued by the South End House in Boston, Italians were characterized as an "excitable race," Jews as having a "an instinct for sharp practice in trade," and Syrians as "liars and deceivers."[64]

And although some settlement workers struggled to protect the right of the immigrants to retain control over their identity and values, they inadvertently undermined that same goal, as was most evident in their approach to children and adolescents. Settlement workers were "shocked to discover the number of parents who regarded offspring as potential sources of revenue."[65] Horrified by the "abuse" of children, these workers called for enactment of better labor laws and for more rigorous enforcement. As Gwendolyn Mink shows in her study *The Wages of Motherhood,* progressive social reformers believed that Americanization would emancipate immigrant women and their children.[66] Far more radically, reformers like Robert Hunter, Florence E. Kelley, and Lillian Wald argued that the state should intervene on behalf of the children by "taking them off the street." In blunter terms, a social worker by the name of Philip Davis argued that the unprotected street child was "public property of which the community is trustee."[67] And children were not the only ones who were to benefit from this paternalism. Adolescents—a social category constructed in the U.S. mid-Victorian climate—were also to be afforded "protection" from their immediate families by guaranteeing them the same solicitude reserved for middle-class youth.

Public schools were equally active in "assimilating" the children of immigrants to an "American" life that was imbued with middle-class values. As their numbers increased from 160 in 1870 to 6,000 by the end of the century, the reach of these schools grew.[68] And their purpose was specific. In the words of one New York high school principal, "Education will solve every problem of our national life, even that of assimilating our for-

eign element."[69] Or, as the Cleveland Americanization Committee advertised in a 1917 poster, public schools were to draw immigrant children from their parents' "Peasantry" to "American City life."[70] In this fashion many children were exposed to the narratives of "American modernity" and learned to feel that their own languages, dress, and customs were stigmas in an intolerant environment.

And these were the sentiments of the more progressive elements in the landscape of U.S. social politics. The majority of the middle class exhibited a far more bluntly racist and reactionary attitude toward immigrants. The "Syrians" experienced several famous incidents of racial prejudice. Congressman John L. Burnett proclaimed in 1907 that the "Syrians" were "the most undesirable of the undesirable peoples of Asia Minor."[71] He was followed in 1914 by Judge Henry Smith of Charleston, South Carolina, who denied George Dow his application for citizenship on the premise that "his skin was darker than the usual person of white European descent."[72] Houghton—who wrote four essays about Lebanese emigrants in the United States for the socially conscious magazine *The Survey*—shows this prejudice to be not simply a phenomenon of the South. Stating it rather delicately, Houghton attributed the "clannishness" of the three thousand Lebanese in Boston to the fact that "even the best of Boston people . . . appear unable to appreciate certain characteristics of the Syrian nature and temperament."[73] In fact, by 1900 the nativist movement had spread to the North, where it attracted a wide following.[74]

Confronted thus on an almost daily basis by people who gazed at them benevolently and otherwise as "foreign," immigrants found themselves in a situation they did not encounter back in their villages. There they never had cause to see their clothes as unfashionable, nor did they regard their words and food as "exotic." In the village, children were brought up in a tight (and at times claustrophobic) social environment, where they were expected to follow closely in the footsteps of their parents. In the *mahjar,* public schools and exposure to a wider and culturally more powerful range of social lives made children more prone to depart from the straight and narrow path. Social workers, bent on "Americanizing" and "sanitizing" the lives of these immigrants, came into the tenements and questioned the most intimate details of their existence.

As all these forces pulled and tugged at the social fabric of their existence, immigrants became aware of the need to reweave that cloth even as its threads frayed at the edges. In other words, they had self-consciously to (re)discover who they "were" and to reconstruct their "home" as a

container of their identities. "Home," as it emerged, was a concoction of romantic memories stoked by distance, new realities that required a place, and plenty of gaps in between.

In apartments, on the street, in coffeehouses, at churches, and in social gatherings, questions about "tradition" were debated, argued, and not always resolved. The nature and contents of this debate are most apparent to us through the pages of Arabic newspapers, a new medium of public expression for the immigrant community.[75] Statistically, between 1892 and 1907, twenty-one Arabic dailies, weeklies, and monthlies were published in the United States alone. Seventeen of these were based in New York City, and most did not survive for long. Nonetheless, when one considers that by 1907 there were only fifty thousand Lebanese immigrants in the United States who had access to eleven publications, it becomes clear that the Arabic press did indeed flourish as a new medium of communication for the community. And while we do not have exact statistics about the number of subscribers, we can guess at these numbers from anecdotal evidence. *Al-Huda* gave a glimpse of its readership when it stated in one defensively toned editorial that even the best Arabic newspaper (a self-referential term) in New York City could not expect its readership to total more ten thousand and that new subscriptions did not surpass two per day. However, it claimed that this low number of readers could be attributed to the fact that many "borrowed" the newspaper from their friends. Thus, we can safely assume that a sizable percentage of the community was exposed to a newspaper that "was beneficial to them . . . and gathered for them various news and helpful information."[76]

Despite their early tendencies to publish self-serving articles and insulting diatribes, the newspapers matured over time and began to include serious discussions of social and political issues that faced the Syrian community in the "West." With titles such as *The Guidance, The Immigrant,* and *The Mirror of the West,* these newspapers clearly regarded themselves as the guideposts for the immigrant community. Their purpose was to instruct readers about the ways and habits of the "West" and how to deal with all the changes living there entailed. This purpose is all the more pronounced when we note that in the late 1920s the title of the most popular Arab American newspaper was *The Syrian World*—a heading that signified a dramatic shift in perspective. The articles, advertisements, and serialized novels which appeared in these newspapers were important in shaping the way the community looked at itself; they promulgated idealized notions about fashion, love, marriage, work, and a host of other subjects. In other words, Arab American newspapers provided a mirror

for the community; in it members could see their growing differences from those left behind and from the "Americans" amidst whom they were residing.

Framing the debates were two quite disparate positions. A "dialogue" that appeared in *al-Huda* on March 22, 1898, illustrates these extremities and is worth quoting in full.

(Two Syrians: A Syrian Nationalist and an Americanized Syrian)

Americanized Syrian: Are you still a villager? Haven't you become civilized?

Syrian Nationalist: Do good manners allow you to insult me this way when you are pretending to be so civilized?

Americanized Syrian: We alone know what it is to be civilized and we regret that you are not one of us.

Syrian Nationalist: And what are the benefits of joining your kind?

Americanized Syrian: Don't you understand that we are all intelligent? For when we become Americanized, we are able to earn more without working hard and we help each other by gaining greater prestige.

Syrian Nationalist: But, I am from the East and I prefer to preserve the honor of my forefathers.

Americanized Syrian: After what I just told you, are you provoked because I called you a villager? Haven't you heard of Darwin who denies that man evolved from man? We are what we are as a result of the evolutionary process. And, your preserving the honor of your ancestors is pure ignorance and lack of education.

Syrian Nationalist: I have not read Darwin and I gladly leave that honor to you. But you can be what you want to be; I am going to remain an Easterner. My original ancestor was Adam and it is likely that his language was Arabic. Long live the East! Down with its enemies.[77]

Here one finds in abbreviated format the distinctions between "modernity" and "tradition." There is the appeal to Darwin and scientific "truths" as the underlying foundation of U.S.—and by extension Western—civilization. Juxtaposed with that "us" is an "East" that is simple, peasant, ignorant, illiterate, and religious. There is the proposed entry into the ranks of the "middle class," as opposed to a clinging to the village. At first glimpse, then, it would appear that this dialogue accepts the civilizational divide between "East" and "West."

Yet, these words are also self-consciously vaudevillian in their intellectual poses. The reader is alerted to that from the start since the article

appeared in *al-Huda* under the title "Wit and Humor." In addition, it is quite easy to recognize that the tone of this "dialogue" mocks the concept of "Americanization." This mockery is most evident when the "Americanized Syrian" proclaims that "we are able to earn more without working hard"—a contrarian notion to the "Protestant work ethic," on which the middle class prided itself. Moreover, "good manners" are set against the notion of "civilization"—two concepts that were supposedly intertwined in middle-class culture. On the other side, we find the "Syrian Nationalist" (a new category that had not existed before) proclaiming that Adam was likely to have spoken Arabic—a claim that is at once unbelievable and empowering against the "scientific" knowledge of "modernity." The total intended effect is thus for the reader to observe the ridiculousness of both positions and to join the writer in shunning such absurd bifurcations. In other words, this article was ultimately a rejection of the divide between "East" and "West," even as it outlined their positions.

In this sense the article reflected the fact that most immigrants hovered in between these positions. They continuously mixed and matched (or mismatched for that matter) what they brought with them and what they saw in the streets and homes of the Americas. New "traditions" were created out of these combinations in compromises that tried to straddle the cultural and class divides which separated Lebanon and peasants from the *mahjar* and immigrants, and the *mahjar* and immigrants from the larger middle-class world surround them. Thus, what we see among the immigrant communities in the Americas is the rise of a class whose members (for the most part) tried to distinguish themselves as different (culturally and socially) from middle-class America as well as from peasant Lebanon. In this process little was spared from argument and scrutiny. Fashion in clothes, ways of rearing children, social etiquette, religion, education, communal identity, and women's work were among the most prominent themes around which the various debates swirled. But all were elements of carving out a place within an overpowering cultural and social space as defined by middle-class "America."

Gaining a sense of community was one of the first tasks that faced immigrants bent on retaining some semblance of control over their collective and individual identities. Coming from villages that were occupied, for the most part, by members of extended households, immigrants identified community with their immediate surroundings. Household and village were the markers that most regularly and predominantly contoured a peasant's sense of belonging. Only on rare occasions did peasants have to refer to religious background to identify themselves. Yet, in

the *mahjar* these markers were not quite as utilitarian. As peasants emigrated beyond the physical space of the village and became dispersed across the Americas, it became harder to use the clan or village in any concrete fashion.[78] Even when family members and villagers from the same locale congregated in, say, Boston or Montevideo, they were no longer as isolated from other clans and villagers. For example, in Fort Wayne, villagers from Rachaya, ^{c}Ayta, ^{c}Irna, ^{c}Ayn ^{c}Arab, and Bloudan, along with people from Zahleh and Beirut, shared kitchens, meals, and stories about life on the peddling road. In New York City—and larger cities in general—the diversity of backgrounds was even greater.[79] Furthermore, outside the Mountain, the reference to a village or clan became somewhat meaningless, at least when one was dealing with the larger American societies. It would have meant little to a *Criolla* from Argentina, who regarded all immigrants from Lebanon as *Turcos,* to be told the village from which an individual hailed. Nuances of regional accents that villagers had used in Lebanon to identify "strangers" would be equally incomprehensible across the language barriers. While in Lebanon the crumpled topography of the mountains kept communities fairly well separated, the flattened terrain of the *mahjar* afforded immigrants no such isolation. In Detroit, for instance, the Lebanese community living on Congress Street was bordered by "Italians, Irish, and blacks, and children of different nationalities were friends."[80] The same "national" diversity equally pervaded the compact urban space of Chicago, Boston, Philadelphia, and most other cities. For all these reasons, then, a new sense of community had to be forged and grafted onto layers of existing identities.

At the highest level of abstraction emerged the "Syrian." From without and within the community this name came to identify all immigrants from Mount Lebanon. Thus, we find social workers referring to the "Syrian" community, and immigrants identifying themselves as from "Syria." For instance, Houghton—one of the earliest social workers to write about the Lebanese immigrant community—refers to it as the "Syrian" community. In the maps drawn by the reformers of the Hull House which showed the ethnic distribution of immigrant communities in Chicago, the entry for immigrants from Mount Lebanon is labeled "Syrian." This appellation extended into official circles by the first few years of the twentieth century. At that time immigration records at Ellis Island began to record the arrival of immigrants from the Mountain under the category of "Syria" as opposed to the previously larger category of "Ottoman Empire." Immigrants themselves came to adopt this term, albeit in a far more limited and problematic fashion.[81]

Beyond the scope of this "national" identification were the more immediately relevant concepts of identity, among which was congregation along religious lines. Maronites, Melkites, and Syrian Orthodox families tried to build churches and attend them as a community of believers. However, given the wide geographic dispersion of these communities, the task was not easy. For example, before 1920, only ninety churches ministered to all three communities, which totaled close to 120,000 people. In addition, the active opposition of the Roman Catholic Church to the immigrant churches kept them from organizing any dioceses or appointing a bishop to serve them. Even the much more organized Syrian Orthodox Church faced a crisis in its membership until the first appointed bishop—Bishop Hawaweeny—sent out a pastoral letter in late 1912 "to his clergy and people forbidding them to accept the ministration of Episcopalian clergy who at that time were deceiving people into believing that Orthodoxy and Anglicanism were synonymous."[82] With these stumbling blocks, churches could provide only limited venues in which the immigrant community could coalesce.

Another approach was to set up associations of all types. Secular in nature, these societies ranged from social clubs to women's charitable societies. Some lasted a few years (like the Young Syrian Society), while others are still going (the ᶜAttiyeh family club). Most were narrowly focused on promoting the cohesion of a clan or of adherents of the same faith. Victoria Samaha was asked—politely but firmly—to resign from the Douma (a village in Mount Lebanon) Society after she married a non-Douma man.[83] But a few, like the United Syrian Society, which had no religious restrictions on membership, were interested in transcending narrow sectarian boundaries and promoting a new, large sense of collective identity. Regardless of the type of association that was formed, a debate was involved. This debate was a conscious attempt on the part of the participants to define their communal identity in an inclusionary as well as an exclusionary manner. Moreover, this sense of identity was in a constant state of tumultuous flux as new people with new ideas entered the community.[84]

Gender and Identity

Despite their importance, these identities were not a constant in the daily existence of immigrants in the *mahjar*. Referring to one's

"Syrianness" or church or association was rarely necessary. A far more immediately relevant set of social signifiers were embodied in the "family." And at that level the discussion about identities and social traditions was more pronounced and tendentious. Evidence is to be found in the various articles and debates that appeared in the "Syrian" press. Rarely did one encounter articles about national identity, the associations, or even religion—except for a good number of critiques of the "corrupt clergy." Far more common were essays that dealt directly and indirectly with the establishment of a new social space with clearly defined roles for individuals and "traditions" for families—even though that clarity could never be attained. For some of the contributors to these debates, the subtext was a search for a way to establish an immigrant middle class. As one author put it, "It is time for everyone to know their place. . . . Not everyone who gathers some money becomes a member of the middle classes and not everyone who dressed his wife in a twenty dollar hat becomes a notable, rather social status in our days is the status of knowledge and manners."[85]

A host of articles appeared in the Lebanese-American press that were specifically meant to articulate the outlines of these new manners and to map the horizons of this new knowledge. During the early years of immigration, for instance, several articles discussed the social behavior of immigrants. One such article was published in the "Social Conventions for the Man and the Woman" section of *al-Huda* under the title "Knocking on the Door." Salim Mukarzel, the author, brought it to the attention of his readers that, "amongst the public in Lebanon, [entering a house] without asking for permission is not considered a failure but a sign of sincere friendship; . . . but here in the United States . . . entering upon [the private space] of a person without asking for permission is considered a fault." Mukarzel went on to provide an inventory of the "modern norms for entering upon a friend or a stranger." These are among those that he listed:

1. No individual should enter upon another individual without first asking for permission, wherever he may be
2. He must knock at the door, and if he is invited to enter then he would, and if he is not invited to enter then he must turn back even if he knew that those with whom he wants to talk are to be found in that room.
3. The visitor must knock at the door gently
4. [One] must not look through the keyhole into the room
5. Excusing those whom you are visiting if he has [a reason] which necessitates turning back the visitor.[86]

These recommendations were obviously an attempt to redefine the social space of the immigrants. In essence, Mukarzel was concerned with establishing a "modern" set of manners which he believed should govern the social relations of individuals. He began his essay by establishing that Lebanon and the United States represent two social environments that sit on opposite sides of the modern/traditional divide. After essentializing both spaces in such a manner, Mukarzel clearly delineated the boundaries of the "modern" social space. In this conception—which he invites his fellow immigrants to subscribe to—social space is centered around the individual and not the household as a whole. Gaining access to such space ceases to be a privilege of belonging to a community and becomes dependent on being invited into that privatized territory.

The justification for this shift is provided by another author who wrote an article a year later pertaining to the same topic. Coming straight to the point, that anonymous author remarked that "the Syrian in this country visits his brother the Syrian and very often he is a heavy burden on his host, for he spends time in pointless and useless conversation and the time of the host is wasted between smoking the *argeelé* [water-pipe] and cigarettes and drinking coffee."[87] Thus he superimposes on time a financial value: to visit "frivolously" is to waste that time—a most valuable commodity in the "modern" world.

If men's visits were—in the eyes of both writers—a waste of time, women's socialization was "the great disaster. . . . [The visit of the Syrian woman] is also heavier than a mountain" because it is spent discussing "trivial" subjects, eating, drinking, and smoking. The writer shows his absolute disdain for such frivolity by counseling that "visits in the absolute should be short because work is a duty; . . . and the woman also has duties some of which is managing her house by preparing food, sweeping rooms, cleaning the furniture and she is also entrusted with . . . raising children and other many things, so if she wastes time then how can she do all of this?"[88] Thus, not only were men expected to be more focused on isolated tasks than on building social relations within a community, but women also were to be equally attentive to "their tasks." Only, in their case, women were to work alone at home emulating the domesticity of the middle classes. In this fashion, a new division of labor was being assigned to a social space that both authors are eager for their compatriots to adopt and which they regard absolutely as a staple of "modernity" and as a way to merge into the mainstream of American society. However, given that this advice was repeated for years to follow, it would appear that immigrants were not taking too well to these proposed boundaries.

Managing time and observing new manners (or not as the persistence of these advice articles demonstrate) were but one aspect of the new "modernity." Parenting—which was also a subject of many articles and books in the mainstream media—was another arena that some authors sought to "rationalize" and "modernize." Around the same time period (the end of the 1890s), other articles counseled readers how to be "modern" parents. One such treatise was written by Elias Qirqmaz, who argued that immigrant parents, but particularly mothers, were not rearing their children in a proper manner. In his article, which he wrote for *al-Huda* in 1899, Qirqmaz summarized all the "ills" that beset "Syrian" children under the title "The Misery of the Syrian Child in the Crib, and in the House, and in the Market." He began his argument by marveling at the "health and vigor" so apparent among children of the "civilized foreign *millal* [plural of *millet,* community]," especially when compared with the "weakness" of the Syrian child. Then he noted that "Arab newspapers [in the *mahjar*] have long dedicated large space for doctors and researchers to show the great mistakes that mothers commit in raising their children."[89]

These mistakes begin at infancy when "the mother throws the baby in the crib and begins to tie him up [swaddle him] to the point where he cannot breathe at times." From there things only get worse as "she places the baby in the kitchen or in a room where the air is spoiled . . . or cigarette smoke hovers above the room like clouds." If a child makes it to the age of four, Qirqmaz mused, then his digestive system is assaulted by all manner of foods that "his weak stomach cannot digest." But the greatest mistake that parents were committing, according to our author, was in the moral upbringing of their children. He wrote, "We would like to bring [your] attention to the ugly habit which the people of our country have grown accustomed to and it is the habit of hitting a child. . . . [It is ugly] because it makes him like an animal who is not afraid of anything but the stick. And if he grows up then he stays in this way not doing anything except with fear and not saying anything except while shaking [from fear]."[90]

His solution to this problem was to morally educate the child and "to habituate him to respect the words of his parents." He then proceeded to criticize parents (but, again, mainly mothers, "upon whom rests the advancement of the world in the future or its destruction") for letting their children spend so much time "on the streets." Such laxity, he complained, only brought the children to a lower level of "lying, cheating and general sleaziness." Finally, Qirqmaz concluded this essay with the grave pronouncement that "it is better for parents not to have children born to

them if they were to disregard them like most Syrians disregard their children in the big cities."[91]

In 1903, Nasrallah Faris concurred with this judgement in the course of his essay "The Syrians and Schools." He began his article in much the same way as Qirqmaz had, by drawing an unfavorable comparison between "American" and "Syrian" children. He wrote, "The Syrian does not care to send his children to school as opposed to the American whose child grows and becomes ready to accept the principles of science and moral education."[92] The "American sends his little one [to school] to learn the sciences because he considers learning and morality the best inheritance he can leave for his children." Juxtaposed with such an "enlightened" attitude toward education was the attitude of the "Syrian" who—per Faris—could care less about his child's education and who lets him "roam the streets and alleys and pick up insolent language." In fact, things had gotten so "bad" in Bangor (Maine) that the "government . . . sent two of its officials to the Syrians to threaten the fathers with penalties and punishment if they do not send their children to the public schools."[93]

Interspersed within this fairly good advice, we find cultural constructions that have little to do with reality and much to do with a world-view that sunders life into two mutually exclusive categories. Both Qirqmaz and Faris totalized the "Syrian" into a monolithic, "uncivilized" being who does not have the power of knowledge that the "West" possesses. Consequently, these authors stipulated for themselves and for "doctors and researchers" the role of transmitting that knowledge in order to "civilize" the community and bring it into the fold of "modernity." In doing so, they sought to impose a capitalist division of labor on knowledge whereby "experts" would own and generate the "truth" while mothers would be the laborers in passing that information along to their children and in rearing them in "modern" ways. These ideas fitted with a new understanding of childhood and, to a lesser extent, adolescence. Children were to be isolated from the community and confined within the walls of the "private" home and the schoolroom in order to "protect" them from bad influences. They were to be sheltered from work and not required to contribute to the family's income. All these elements were obviously the hallmarks of middle-class life in the United States and means to perpetuate the isolation that the middle class was engendering by narrowing the focus of daily life to singular households rather than keeping that focus on an integrated community. Moreover, it assumed that having children lead such a middle-class life would create a happier and more "wholesome" childhood.

Standing in the path of these attempts to impose a middle-class view of "modernity" on the immigrant community was the fact that most Lebanese women worked outside the home. Consequently, the desired "cult of domesticity" could not be achieved without a construction of a new concept of "woman" and gender roles. Thus, we find—beginning with the earliest appearance of Lebanese newspapers (circa 1892)—articles dealing passionately and vociferously with the topics of women's work, their status, education, and comportment, as well as marital relations. By the turn of the twentieth century, a few of these newspapers (like *al-Saʾih, Mirāat al-Gharb,* and *al-Huda*) were even dedicating regular columns to gender issues. Under the title "Womanly Topics of Discussion," one or two (and sometimes three) articles on "womanhood" appeared in *al-Huda* at least every other day. And while in the late 1890s one only read the writings of a couple of women authors, by 1905 the number of such contributors had surpassed ten. On the one hand, most of these essays were attempting to deal with the contradictions women's work brought to light in the "traditional" patriarchal contract. On the other hand, this labor transgressed the "public/private" divide that was coming to define middle-class life in the United States—a life that, as noted earlier, some observers were eager for the community to join.

Elias Nassif Elias, a regular early contributor to *al-Huda,* was one of those. He argued that women's work tarnished the honor of the "Syrians." To make his point, Elias told of an experience he had while sitting in the lobby of the Central House Hotel in Bridgewater, Maine. "While talking with some men about various matters," he wrote, "[I heard] a light knock on the door, so one of us got up to open [it] only to find a Syrian woman weighed down by her heavy load; . . . and she sighed saying: I will sell to those men for the amount of 4 or 5 dollars and I do not care if they laughed at, or made fun of, me."[94] With the stage set, Elias proceeded to describe a scene in which the "American" men ask the "Syrian" woman to do various "humiliating things" (such as letting one of the men tie her shoes), and in which they are patently making fun of her. Elias could not stand the situation anymore, so he left without identifying himself as a compatriot of the woman. Without reflecting on the irony inherent in his lack of intervention in the "degrading" affair, Elias proceeded—in his composition—to reproach the "Syrians" for letting "their" women work. He scathingly asked, "Oh, you dear Syrians who claim honor; . . . is it honorable to send your women to meander and encounter such insults."[95]

As more immigrants made the move from itinerant peddling to a "respectable" settled life, the tone of the opposition to women's work grew more strident. A merchant by the name of Yusuf al-Zaᶜini was far more explicit about the nature of the danger facing this "honor." In his tract "The Female Qashé Sellers," he proclaimed women's work as "a disease whose microbes have infested healthy and sick bodies alike," and which leads women to "lewd, filthy and wanton behavior."[96]

Five years later, in 1908, Yusuf Wakim wrote with concern about this same matter of women's unabated work and its effects on their "honor" and that of the "Syrian" community. He recounted that he knew "of one man who left his wife in Mexico with three children and came to Pennsylvania; [there] he met an emigrant woman who was still young and who had come to America to bring to her husband in Syria the old country the treasures of the new world. . . . [The two] went together to New York . . . living in a house whose owner is also living with his female partner."[97] Maintaining that such examples were neither exceptions nor benign, Wakim advocated that the emigration of "Syrian" women should be prohibited or at least should be subject to certain conditions, in order to stop such licentious behavior. In fact, he asserted:

> The useful medicine for stopping women's emigrating by themselves is for the Syrian press to strongly decry and criticize every Syrian man who allows his wife or daughter to come to America by herself, and for all the reporters and agents and readers of the Arab newspapers, in all of the lands of emigration, to make known every immoral woman and to announce the name of her husband and her family, place of residence, the date of her emigration, and the details of her life history and actions in the *mahjar,* and to decry every man that helps the Syrian woman to continue in her immoral behavior. . . . And if need be then it is necessary to inform Uncle Sam's government about the treachery of every treacherous man and woman.[98]

But the "concern" was not just about protecting an "honor" grounded in the "traditional" construct of patriarchy. Many of those objecting to women's work saw it as a departure not only from Lebanese norms but, more important, from the standards of the middle class in the United States, into whose ranks they were trying to gain entry. Elias—who slipped out ever so quietly from the lobby of the Central Hotel in Bridgewater, Maine—is a case in point. After chastising the "Syrians" for transgressions against "honor" because of women's work, Elias crossed almost seamlessly into the "modern" variation of patriarchy by concluding, "The woman was created for the house and the man for work, and

it is shameful for the man and woman to exchange their jobs."[99] Such an immaculate split, which had little to do with the lives of many immigrants, was an essential element in the attempt to form a Lebanese middle class in the *mahjar.*

Equally, all three articles share a common concern with infusing immigrant life with middle-class fears of sexuality run rampant. Using clinical terms, they identified women's work as the "disease" that was "infesting" the communal body and simultaneously destroying "traditional honor" and "modern morality." In a singular turn of phrase, then, these authors collapsed women's economic independence with sexual freedom and defined both as detrimental. Part of the "cure" for these problems was to subjugate women to male authority and confine them to the "home." This analysis of the situation and the resulting recommendation echoed the fears of the larger American middle class of sexuality and the restrictions its members imposed in order to confine female sexuality within the house.[100] And like the Anglo-Saxon bourgeois moralists who surrounded them, these authors sought then to universalize the "true" gender identity that derived from middle-class history and sensibilities. In fact, other authors argued that the only way to avoid the "fall" of women into "ruin" was to mix with the "middle classes of America" and not the lower classes, "with whom we the Syrians mingle."[101] However, as Christine Stansell noted for the working classes of New York in the 1860s, "the . . . culture of [working-class] mothers [was] antithetical to the terms of home life and womanhood developed and championed by urban ladies."[102]

The criticism leveled against women's work was met with mild objections from more liberal elements within the immigrant community. These contrarian views did not advocate women's work as inherently good but rather as a necessary evil. Speaking from an equally "modernist" and middle-class perspective, these writers tended to emphasize that the fault lay not with the women but with their "lazy" or "incapacitated" husbands or fathers. Read, for example, the following rejoinder by Nasrallah Faris. Reacting to Elias's story of the woman peddler, Faris wrote, "We agree with the writer that [a woman] should not travel to sell if her husband is capable of properly taking care of her needs and the needs of her house, but if that woman had emigrated and left in the country a sick man . . . or one heavily indebted then is it not permissible for her to sell? Or if her husband is with her and he was sick, then who will take care of him, or if he was a gambling drunkard then how can she depend on him?"[103] ᶜAfifa Karam, one of the earliest women writers in the *mahjar,* took up

the same theme in a later article. Addressing those writers who were maligning the "honor" of women peddlers, she said, "You ascribe licentiousness, depravity and immorality only to the [female] *qashé* sellers, but you are wrong because an immoral woman is not constrained from committing ugliness simply because she is living in palaces, or because she is imprisoned there." Elaborating further on her defense of women peddlers, she emphasized that "you probably know that there are many poor widows or orphaned girls in the country [Lebanon] who are suffering from the pain of hunger, . . . they and their children. Those, therefore, were driven by circumstances and came to these lands [(the United States) to make a living]."[104] In this construction, women's work is dissociated from morality and honor, while its connection to class is maintained. Karam and Faris make it clear that only poor women work and, by extension, that work is a necessary evil and not a right for the woman.

Following in the same vein, other articles and editorials sought to dispel concern about women's labor by stating that a woman's honor, "like pure gold," will not be tarnished by work. To emphasize that point, *al-Huda* reminded its readers that women had worked in the silk factories of Mount Lebanon without any visible side-effects and that they did so long before they arrived in "Amirka."[105] Thus the "factory girls" of the previous generation provided a history and "tradition" of women's work. Yet even as this connection was repeated in defense of women's later work, it also built on the notion that working women are of the lower classes and that middle-class women have no reason to labor outside the house.

Nevertheless, even as they defended poor women's work as a necessity, these writers converged with their conservative counterparts in constructing an ideal of "womanhood" that was distinct in its "modernity" from the life experiences of most immigrant women and from the lives of "peasant women." Thus we find the editor of *al-Huda* addressing the issue of gender roles with a lengthy article—replete with historical "evidence," fables, and imagery from American life—that contended that men and women should occupy separate but equal places in society. Waxing poetic, the author wrote, "Jules Simon, the famous French philosopher said, 'The improvement of human society is by the improvement of women,' and others have said, "She who rocks the cradle with her left shakes the world with her right.' There is no doubt that the education of the woman and her elevation in status is an education and elevation of ourselves, because the woman is the nurturer of children, and children are the men and women of tomorrow."[106]

Karam went further in elucidating the notion of "womanhood" by creating four mutually exclusive categories of "woman." Seeking to dispel the mirage that the "American Woman" is perfect, she submits to her readers that sublime "womanhood" does not reside in appearances or external beauty but in deeds. Accordingly, a woman is either "good," "deceitful," "working," or "ignorant." The "good" woman is the one who attends to her duties and helps her mother while a young woman, and as a bride makes her husband happy and makes her house a paradise." "Working" women, however, are not—"God Forbid"—necessarily without morals, but they do exist in an environment that is filled "with dangers" which could compromise their honor. However, for Karam, the worst two kinds of women are the "ignorant" woman, "the disease of civilization and the curse of modernization," and the "deceitful" woman, who pretends to be "good" but is in reality a "snake that poisons the honey of life." Trying to be beautiful, powdering the face, and wearing corsets to make thin waists were all considered frivolous affairs by Karam. Women were wasting money on external beauty while ignoring the need for an inner beauty that the "good" woman maintains through her proper manners and morals as well as through her knowledge of how to run her household efficiently and effectively.[107]

Education was a critical element for this new "good" woman. Education would allow the woman to fulfill her "natural" duty of being the "queen of her house and her small following: her little children," a role deemed critical by these writers for the modernization of their community.[108] The editor of one Lebanese-American newspaper approvingly quoted an "American" magazine on this point. He wrote that the "educated, wise, gentle, hardworking and pure woman lifts her husband and brother and friend [to a better status] while the ignorant, frivolous, mean, and idiotic woman lowers them."[109] Mariam al-Zammar, who saw women as "queen[s] of [their] house," illustrated this point through the juxtaposition of two "types" of mothers: one is educated to "manage" her house, while the other is illiterate and incapable of taking control of matters inside her "kingdom." The first mother plants "good seeds" and reaps "good fruit," while the second produces wayward children.[110]

Or, as Karam wrote, "education and moral upbringing are part of the duties of the woman towards her children, so if she herself does not know them then how can she teach them [to her children]." To prove her point, Karam asked her readers to go with her in thought to the villages of Lebanon. She then asks, "Don't you find that every man there is a 'ghoul' . . . and why if not because his mother knows nothing other than

the story of the ghoul so she teaches it to him." Juxtaposing the "monstrous" upbringing in the "villages" (a term meant to indicate "backward traditions") with the refined existence in the cities of the "West," Karam concluded that the moral salvation of the "Lebanese" could be found only in the education of young women.[111]

However a serious obstacle stood in the way of attaining this level of "civilized" existence: men's recalcitrance. One author noted that "the [Syrian] man demeans, curses and hits the woman."[112] Carrying this refrain, Karam noted in one of her essays that the "Syrian" woman is among the most pathetic women in the world and "that she is not of the same status as Western women."[113] Asking rhetorically of her opponents in the debate (in this case an Iskandar Hatem), "What is the cause of this inferiority?" she quickly added, "If he [Hatem] tells me that the whole fault does not lie with the man, then I will answer him: with who then? Isn't it he [Hatem] who said that he [the man] is the manager of her affairs[?] . . . So if he respected . . . and dwelt on educating her does he not think that she will learn and acquire [better] status, and in fact [become] a complete woman."[114] Thus, Karam creates a circular relationship between gender roles and status. A man cannot climb the social ladder of respectability without the woman at his side. Yet, for the "woman" to help in this process, she must be educated and made "complete," and helping her become so is the responsibility of the man.

Later articles expanded on this theme, coupling a rise in social status with the notion of "equal but separate" gender roles. Both al-Zammar and Karam argued that marital harmony must suffuse the household in order to create an environment suitable for nurturing children and to keep them from vices like "drunkenness and gambling." Such a state of being can come about, according to these moralists, only if the roles of the man are revised as well as those for the women. "When a man marries," Karam wrote, "it becomes [part] of his primary duties to provide happiness to his wife and his children."[115] Such happiness will not be attained unless he spends his free time with his family rather than in the coffeehouses or at the homes of people. Furthermore, and in exchange for the hard work that a woman puts into the house and its management, the husband should provide love, gentleness, and guidance rather than consider himself the "boss and the lawgiver within the family." Although the woman must "of course" obey the man, this obedience should be voluntary rather than forced and derive from love rather than fear.[116]

"True" love was located at the heart of this marital bliss. Thus, it too had to be defined for the consumption of the readers of the press. The

first step in this process was to depict previous marital relationships as "barbaric" and devoid of compassion, in order to make the contrast with "romantic love" all the more compelling. For this purpose, many serialized novels, poems, essays, and articles attacked the "tradition" of arranged marriage and exalted the ideal of romantic and free love. As one writer put it, "Love is one of the necessities of this universe and it is given to all."[117] This sentiment was dramatized in many novels. One of these was entitled *Layla.* In one particularly saccharine passage, the father of Layla has the following exchange with his daughter: "Do you not know that I am planning to marry you to [your] paternal cousin, Yusuf, for he is the best man in our city and he has asked for your hand, so what do you say to that? So Layla cried deeply then sighed and said: Oh Father, do you not take pity on your daughter whose heart has been seared by love, do you not take pity on my youth, do you not take pity on my sorrows? If you insist on marrying me to Yusuf then I will die. I do not want any other than Farid as lover and husband."[118]

Sprawled across the pages of Lebanese-American newspapers were articles that questioned more directly what Layla's father was attempting to do. *Al-Huda* launched this attack in a series of articles starting in 1899 and continuing through 1908. Throughout, new and "modern" rules for marriage were laid out to "enlighten" the readers. For instance, in an article dated March 5, 1899, the writer emphasized that marriage is not only desirable but economically "sound" since single men tend to waste their money on "immoral" behavior in "clubs, theaters and houses of ill-repute." Approaching the issue "scientifically," the author stated that men should marry between the ages of twenty-two and thirty and "should chose their mates not for their wealth but for their education."[119] A little over a year later, the concept of "modern" marriage were expanded by another author, who declared that marriage should be based on "individual preference" and not be arranged or forced.[120] A. Hakim, who decried the "pathetic" custom of arranged marriage in an article in the *Syrian World,* expounded further on the reasons for "modern" marriage. Just as other authors linked the progress of society to the "cult of domesticity" and to "new" relations between husband and wife, Hakim contended that "modern" marriage "is the basis of happy family life, which in turn is the basis of the prosperity and progress of the nation." Borrowing from the racial theories that abounded in the United States at the time, he went on to argue that "upon the outcome of our efforts along this direction will depend either the improvement of the status of the race or its deterioration."[121]

In less racial and more universalizing and literary prose, the *mahjar* authors wrote poems and short stories criticizing these same marital "traditions." Mikhail Nuᶜaymi, Khalil Gibran, Nasib ᶜArida, ᶜAbd al-Masih Haddad, and Amin Rihani—most of them members of the Pen Club—wrote to one extent or another in the tradition of Romanticism. They incorporated "the belief that the individual is an infinite reservoir of possibilities and that if society can be rearranged by the destruction of all oppressive orders then these possibilities will be realized and progress will be achieved."[122]

More than any, Gibran fully embraced that tradition. For instance, he depicted his opposition to arranged marriages most powerfully in the four stories that make up *Spirits Rebellious* (*al-ᵓArwah al-Mutamarrida*).[123] In one entitled "Rose al-Hani," Gibran powerfully evokes the idea that love scorns social conventions. A young woman is married to an older rich man, who is kind enough and looks after her. However, her existence is shaken to its core when she meets her soul mate. After living a double life for a while—in which she is married to one man but loves another—she finally abandons her husband and goes to live with her beloved, ignoring in the process all social norms. In the second story, "The Bridal Bed," the ending is more tragic and correspondingly more evocative of the theme of Romantic love. On the day of her arranged wedding, Layla sees her beloved and decides that she cannot follow through on what her socially ambitious father expects her to do. She meets her beloved in the garden, and when he refuses to run away with her, she stabs him to death, then calls the guests to come and watch her kill herself after delivering a sermon on life and love.

Like Gibran, Mikhail Nuᶜaymi wrote scathing critiques of "tradition." His were more eloquent in their subtlety. In one short essay, entitled "The Barren," he depicted "tradition" as the scourge which destroys happiness and love. A couple's happily married life begins to unravel when the woman remains without a child for over a year. The assumption is made that it is her fault, and she is compelled by her in-laws' pressure to resort to "traditional superstitions" in order to become pregnant. Under the weight of these "traditional" expectations, her husband's love is slowly replaced with coldness and aversion. Finally, she commits suicide, leaving behind a note that tells her husband that while she still loved him, she could not live without his love.[124] "Tradition" in marriage, in gender roles, in raising children, and in the myriad of social relations and mores which governed daily life was thus evoked and attacked.

Yet, even among the most ardent critics of "tradition"—as an articulated, monolithic set of oppressive social relations—there was never a de-

sire to abandon the "East." For many of the same commentators who advocated the embrace of "modernity" in most aspects of life also recognized the coldness and alienation that the "modern" engendered in daily life. They saw the supposed innate "spirituality" of the "East" as an antidote to the materialism of the "West" and as a means to soften the harshness of the "modern" world. Thus, we find Gibran painting in words and drawings pastoral images of Lebanon which stand serene in their soft haziness. But not only writers employed such images to escape the "modernity" of the *mahjar.* Emotionally charged *zajal* rhymes, which became wildly popular after the 1890s among immigrant Lebanese, recalled images of daily village life and of working and living off the land. Emile Mubarak, one of the folk poets, wrote of how he missed plowing the soil behind an ox and smelling the fresh essence of newly turned soil. Another poet, Asᶜad Saba, spoke of the month of April in the village, with the blossoming of trees and flowers and the start of agricultural life.[125] Romanticized as they were, these rhymes spoke of the distance these immigrants began to feel from the world they left and of their discomfort with the world they came to. Strung across that distance, the simple words were one way to come to terms with the tensions immigrants were experiencing.

Conclusion

Like other immigrant communities, then, the Lebanese came face to face with a new and politically charged map of the world which divided it into "traditional" and "modern."[126] This state of being was depicted for the Yiddish community in New York in two cartoons which appeared in a Yiddish newspaper. One cartoon showed a group of men, women, and children sitting in an uptown theater and behaving as "Americans"—that is, listening passively and attentively. The second showed the same group revealing their "true" selves by being loud and boisterous, eating and drinking. The struggle was between alternative ways of becoming "American."[127] For the Lebanese this tension was equally present. They were criticized and derided for their "way of life" in the words, social mores, and material culture of a powerful middle class in the United States. This criticism compelled some commentators to seek a "modernization" of their community that would bring its members close to being part of idealized middle-class life in the United States.

Yet, other commentators—and even the same ones, as noted above—did not want to forego their "native" identities, which distinguished them as Lebanese, Syrians, Arabs, Easterners. In those they saw a set of identities that were satisfying emotionally and that allowed them a sense of uniqueness and individuality that "modernity" was threatening to immerse in its sea of middle-class uniformity.

As a result of this tension, immigrants were neither assimilated nor did they remain insulated in a cocoon of tradition. New hairstyles—including short hair for a few brave souls—lipstick, and other implements of "modern" self-decoration became tools for burrowing underneath the foundations of patriarchal control. Yet, fathers and mothers still kept a tight rein over the movements, labor, and actions of their daughters. Romantic love was propounded as the ideal of individual liberty that would lead to social progress, even as many immigrants continued to marry their paternal cousins. A woman was expected to become a "queen" of her house, at the same time as most women were outside their homes working to make a living. A man was counseled to stay home and embrace the middle-class norm of isolated domesticity even as more coffeehouses opened in the larger immigrant communities. Immigrants attended the nickelodeon, where they were supposed to passively see "America" and learn to be "American," yet these theaters were the sites of self-expressive commentary and antics.

As a result of these dizzying circumstances, the construction of a new set of identities was a tumultuous affair that produced many variations on similar themes. Being "Syrian" or "Lebanese" was argued about but never really resolved; a sense of sectarian identity emerged and was submerged at various times; as a result, some felt that it was an essential element of their selves, while others derided organized religion as a curse. Most notably, however, the "family" as the locale of intense social relations was subjected to the same pressures of "modernization." There were constant calls to shrink the scope of these families to an idealized nuclear family living a prototypical middle-class life. However, this "ideal" could not be realized. The relations which defined the "family" were never isolated behind closed doors but continued to extend—albeit in a revised form—into the neighborhood and even across the ocean. Relations between husband and wife may have grown more intimate, but that did not exclude either of them from their gendered spheres. Daughters and sons gained more independence, but many still had to work to satisfy familial obligations. In short, then, between 1890 and 1914 the Lebanese im-

migrant community constructed a new set of relations that were neither "modern" nor "traditional," neither "Eastern" nor "Western." Rather, these new identities were peculiar to their historical experience. And as much as "hybridity" differentiated them from middle-class "America" it would also come to distinguish them from peasant "Lebanon."

5

Back to the Mountain

Emigrants who returned to Lebanon came back to a place in flux. As part of a modernizing Ottoman world, Mount Lebanon was experiencing many of the same bureaucratic reforms as well as political and economic changes that were underway in the rest of the imperial territories. While the language and intent of these reforms would have struck many emigrants as familiar, it was the social changes which would have given them the most profound sense of déjà vu. In Lebanon, as in many of the surrounding lands, the "modern woman," the "middle-class family," and "scientific education" were an integral part of a modernizing project that was meant to bring the Ottoman empire, Egypt, and Iran "away from Asia."[1] And, as in all these areas, discussions in Lebanon were focused on the construction of the category of "woman" as a universalizing and totalizing identity; women's roles—as mothers, wives, and managers of households—were intimately linked with a newly construed private sphere. In turn, as Kumkum Sangari and Sudesh Vaid argue for the case of South Asia, this middle-class discursive production of public and private spheres was tied, either explicitly or implicitly, to the formation of this class within wider economic and political processes.[2] In other words, the constructions of family and gender were integral to the definition of a new middle class in Lebanon, which in turn further crystallized the roles that women and men of this class were to play.

To emigrants this was a familiar scene. Newspapers in the *mahjar* had carried the same discussions and arguments about "modernity" and "tradition." In fact, their experiences were even more intense as they took place in countries where the invention of the "modern" had been going on for a longer time and where it had come to be more deeply integrated into the fabric of society. In the *mahjar,* emigrants had grappled with a hegemonic society that demanded that they abandon their "traditional" ways and embrace "modernity" in order to be permitted entry. Hence, and on their return to Lebanon, emigrants could not but infuse the debates, arguments, and compromises that made up their most recent social history in the *mahjar* into their villages and towns. Whether they were visiting for a spell or going back for good, they crammed their trunks with the stuff of the new hybrid culture which they struggled to make in the *mahjar. Franji* (Western) clothes, chiming clocks, and new foods were only a few items of the "New World" which they brought along. Quaint accents, new family "traditions," and new gender roles were additional cultural baggage. As much as these things had set them apart ethnically from the "mainstream" in New York or Buenos Aires, in Mount Lebanon they came to distinguish returned emigrants as members of a middling class.

For emigrants, then, there was some confluence—if not absolute similitude—between the "modernity" they had left in the *mahjar* and the one which was being made in Lebanon. This convergence had two ramifications for the history of Lebanon. While in other parts of the Middle East the middle classes remained a small percentage in comparison with the overwhelming peasant and laboring classes, in Lebanon returning emigrants swelled the ranks of the middle class to make it far more visible and potent in the making of a "modern" Lebanon. Moreover, while this process remained centered in the major cities of most of the region, in Lebanon emigrants brought the debates and tensions surrounding the definition and articulation of "modernity" into the hinterlands. Yet, as in the *mahjar,* emigrants were not merely idle observers and adopters of these changes. Rather, they brought their own desires and experiences to bear on the process of making the "modern" in Lebanon. In other words, not only did the experiences of Lebanese emigrants greatly amplify the intensity and reach of the debates within Lebanon about "modernity," but they also helped contour and define its constituent manners and customs. This process stands out as one of the main and lasting effects of emigration on Lebanon, and we turn to it now.

Ambiguous Numbers

Before embarking on an analysis of the middle-class world which returning emigrants helped to construct in Lebanon, we need to establish that enough returned to make my contentions plausible. So we ask, How many emigrants ultimately returned to the Mountain? The answer is simple: we do not know. More accurately, we do not know exactly how many Lebanese returned to the Mountain before the onset of World War I. Still, as historians are prone to do, we can estimate. Our sources vary from the anecdotal to the quasi-scientific. Writing in 1903, Ravndal, the U.S. consul general in Beirut, recounted the following conversation: "H. E. Naoum Pacha, for 10 years Governor General of Lebanon, told me once, half in jest, half in earnest, that the time seemed not far-off when the whole province would become American property and all its inhabitants American citizen[s]." Ravndal went on to affirm in his report that indeed "one find[s] American citizens of Syrian birth in villages all over the Lebanon mountains."[3] In a more specific report that he made earlier, Ravndal noted that "in one 5-year period more than 330 returned emigrants have been placed on our Register as American citizens." He added, in an irritated tone, "As an instance of the disregard of the formalities required of an American citizen [upon returning to Lebanon,] I beg to cite the case of a party that landed here during the recent cut in Atlantic transportation rates. The majority of the 75 Syrians from New York onboard were stated by passengers to possess evidence of American citizenship yet not one asked for the assistance of this consulate in landing, although two did actually come to the Consulate for the purpose of registry."[4] If for every returned emigrant who registered there were thirty-seven or thirty-eight who did not, by doing a bit of arithmetic we can estimate that in the five-year period of which he spoke over twelve thousand emigrants returned. Perilously extrapolating from these numbers, we reach a rate of return of about 45 percent.[5]

Needless to say, such estimates are hardly as straightforward as the process of division and multiplication would make them to appear. For example, it is difficult to assert a constant ratio of those who registered versus those who did not—that is, the 37:1 ratio that was used in reaching the twelve thousand figure. (Although it does seem from many consular reports that indeed only an absolute minority of returned emigrants bothered to go to the U.S. consulate in Beirut for the purpose of informing Ravndal and his colleagues of their presence in the country.) Another

thorny issue has to be considered: How do we know that the rate of return was constant? Records from the Ottoman customs house in Beirut are almost nonexistent, and the maritime companies did not bother to keep regular or accurate records. Moreover, it was only toward the first decade of the twentieth century that U.S. immigration officials began to record the departure of immigrants. Pushing aside such troublesome considerations for a moment, we can mine the immigration records for another set of numbers. For the three years between 1908 and 1910, the U.S. Immigration Commission reported that 3,981 "Syrians" left the United States and went to—presumably—Mount Lebanon. Over the three years, these emigrants returned at a fairly constant rate: 1,355 in 1908, 907 in 1909, and 1,058 in 1910. In other words, if these figures are any indication, the rate of return was fairly stable, albeit smaller than that calculated from Ravndal's comments. In the estimate of the Commission, these figures represent 26 percent of the Syrians who emigrated to the United States in this time period, or—put another way—the rate of return to the Mountain from the United States was one in four.[6]

To make the numbers even more ambiguous, a French report for this same time period provides a much higher rate of return. In 1927, Commandant Pechkoff reported to his superiors in the French Ministère des Affaires Étrangères that of the "9,188 Lebanese migrants who were registered at their entry into the United States between 1908 and 1909, 8,725 (i.e. 95 per cent) were reported to have returned to their homeland in the following years."[7] Although this number is certainly far too high and is clearly at odds with the figures from the U.S. Immigration Commission, it expands dramatically the range of possibilities for the rate of return migration. A fourth possible source of information is Arthur Ruppin's 1917 study of the economic conditions of Bar al-Sham (Levant). Quoting the "official" statistics for the port of Beirut, Ruppin reports that 27,868 individuals arrived there between 1912 and 1915, while 41,752 people departed during that same period.[8] Assuming that the great majority of passengers in both directions were peasants on their way out or back to the Mountain, then the rate of return would amount to 66.75 percent. To add to the puzzle, emigrants were returning to Mount Lebanon from Argentina and Brazil as well as from the United States. According to one study, the rate of return from Argentina was a little over than 29 percent.[9] Of course, into all the preceding confusion we must throw the ultimate wrench in the machine: we do not know how many emigrants returned permanently to the Mountain as opposed to those who merely went back for a visit. Frustratingly, then, we are left with as many "guesstimates" as sources.[10]

So, how do we answer our original question? The truth of the matter is that exactitude in numbers is not as important for our purposes as simply knowing that "many" emigrants did return to the Mountain after spending some years in the *mahjar.* In other words, these wildly varying rates of return can still provide us with a crucial answer. If we accept the lowest of all five rates of return to be the most valid, we still end up calculating that by 1914 somewhere around 77,594 emigrants had returned to the Mountain.[11] Even at this low rate of return (and it is equally likely that the rate was higher), it should be clear that return migration added a significant number of people—with a disproportionate financial worth—to the 414,400 people in the Mountain. And most of these people began their journey back by the turn of the century, with most returning sometime toward the end of the first decade of the twentieth century. Having reached this conclusion, it behooves us to reflect, even if briefly, on the reasons for this return.

An implicit assumption in early U.S. studies of immigration was that those who returned to their country of origin were the immigrants who did not succeed in the United States. These "Fourth of July Orators"—as one historian called them—could not conceive of any other reason that would compel immigrants to leave the land of opportunity for the "old" country, with its "outdated and oppressive customs."[12] More sophisticated commentators who actually talked to emigrants decided that there were in fact two types of returning emigrants: those who succeeded and those who failed.[13] There is no doubt that some returned because they had not been able to attain their dreams of financial wealth. However, those would have been few and far between. If they had indeed failed to accumulate money, then it certainly would have been difficult for them to afford the $40 or $50 needed to buy the return ticket on a steamer. More likely, their hesitation to go back derived from the shame factor. These folks had left their homes and—in many cases—their families only to make money. To go back as poor as they had been when they left (or even poorer) would have been rather shameful, particularly as many others returned with pockets full of dollars. Therefore, poorer emigrants would have been more likely to stay in the *mahjar* than to return empty-handed. However, many did return simply because they had attained their main goal for coming: to make money.

But money was not the only factor. Just as many reasons prompted people to emigrate in the first place, there were an equal number for their return to their villages and towns. Some emigrants returned because they were homesick. They missed their families, their homes and villages, their

language and food. As the years went by, their memories of what they had left behind grew fonder and more romantic. *Zajal* rhymes buried the muddy fields and cold winters under images of grapevines laden with fruit and luxuriant summer days. As one *zajal* poet who lived in the *mahjar*, Asʿad Saba, lamented:

> There near the river on the hills
> In my verdant village
> Do you think I will ever go back to roof the *ʿirzal*
> And spend the evenings?
> Gather the figs and cluster the grapes.[14]

Another emigrant poet, Michel Trād, appealed, in the name of the "Mountain," to anonymous emigrants:

> Stay with us here in the Mountain
> I will make your bed out of jasmine
> I will cover you with clouds and roses
> I will feed you almonds and figs.[15]

In evening conversations friends in the *mahjar* recalled the good times and interspersed their recollections with *mijanaʿ* and *ʿala dalʿouna,* the trademark songs of the Mountain. All this rekindled the desire to go home. So it is not surprising that some did go back for just that reason.

Amplifying this homesickness was the fact that others did not like America. Their visions of streets laden with gold—which had attracted them in the first place—were corrected on their arrival. They saw the misery of the industrial capitalism that was fueling America's economic revival. The following words, written by a Russian Jewish immigrant in the Yiddish newspaper *Forverts,* echoed the sentiments of many other immigrants, including those from Mount Lebanon: "Where is the golden land, where are the golden people? What has happened to human feeling in such a great wide world, in such a land which is, as it is said, a land flowing with milk and honey? When in such a rich city like New York on 88 Clinton Street a woman is dying of hunger, of loneliness, and need—that can only say: 'Cursed be Columbus, cursed be he for discovering America.'"[16] In other words, many were perceptive enough to understand that in return for material comfort the United States exacted a social cost. Furthermore, as we noted in the previous chapter, the lives of immigrants were under scrutiny, if not attack, by middle-class social reformers and nativists, who sought to "Americanize" and "modernize" these "foreigners." While such attempts rarely attained their specific goals, they

nonetheless took a toll on the identities and lives of immigrants. Some were willing to make those compromises. But others turned their backs on middle-class "American" society and headed home for what they hoped would be a familiar and comfortable social setting. In the end, one must add, these reasons were not mutually exclusive. Rather, financial success, homesickness, and unwillingness to accept the harsh pace of life in the United States meshed into a singular desire to go "home."

"Home"

Their first glimpse of that "home" was the crowd of relatives and friends waiting for them at the port of Beirut or Tripoli eager to celebrate their return—and to see the gifts they came bearing. For emigrants of greater wealth, poets were commissioned to write panegyrics, and newspapers published news of their "happy return." In October of 1906, for instance, an article announced the return "from the American lands" of "the exalted Amir Hani Qaᶜadan Shihab with his family after an absence of 7 years during which he obtained his goals."[17] Qaysar Ibrahim Maalouf—"the exalted writer"—also returned that year to Zahleh "from the American lands . . . after he spent in it a long time where he was an example of energetic work and honesty."[18] Those who were not quite as prominent, financially or otherwise, were still feted, albeit in more modest and localized fashion. In either case, the celebrations went on for weeks. During the villagewide celebrations, sheep were slaughtered in honor of the returned emigrants, and feasts were laid out for the whole village. No sooner was that phase over than the emigrant was expected to return the favor—in double for good measure.

But all was not that joyfully simple or straightforward. "Home" had changed, and romanticized images were quickly dispelled. Politically, Mount Lebanon was in the midst of both continuation and change. The Mutasarrifiyya government—which had run the affairs of the Mountain since 1861—was replete with corruption and nepotism under various governors.[19] Yet beyond the government bureaucracy—which, to be fair, included many conscientious civil servants—attempts at reforms were afoot. Critics were demanding that the government be more responsive to the citizenry of the Mountain. In practical terms, this demand translated into calls for transparency in the hiring and firing of government employees and for considering merit above political connections in dol-

ing out positions.[20] Moreover, the government of Mount Lebanon had "modernized" its postal service and customs at the port of Beirut and had attempted to create a coherent and "clean" judicial system to deal with the growing number of law suits. On a civil level, political clubs (secret and public) were debating the idea of citizenship and nationality as it pertained to the Lebanese within the Ottoman Empire. Although only the radical few (such as the Arab society al-Fatat) envisioned a separate nation, the majority of Lebanese intellectuals still wanted to safeguard and enhance the Mountain's semi-independence from the Sublime Porte.[21] One of these clubs was Harakat al-Islah, which argued for a larger degree of self-government in the Arab provinces, including Lebanon. In making their respective arguments, these intellectuals employed the language of the "modern," and particularly democracy, to justify their claims.

Debates were not always centered overtly around politics. Rather, a large number of "clubs" and societies were dedicated to exploring scientific and literary themes. Members of these various associations would meet to discuss a book authored by a European scientist or the poetry of al-Mutanabi (a fabled medieval Arab poet). They would "read" the history of the Arabs from the perspective of newly found nationalist aspirations and discuss language as a "modern" tool of self-expression. To satisfy the growing demand for knowledge and thought (which was promoted by the proliferation of institutions of higher education), a vibrant press emerged in Beirut and in the Mountain. Between 1858 and 1918 close to 350 Lebanese newspapers and magazines were published in Beirut, Tripoli, Sidon, and various parts of the Mountain.[22] While many of these periodicals lasted a year or two at most, some (like *Hadiqat al-Akhbar* and *Lubnan*) survived for decades. In addition, journals and newspapers that were established by Lebanese émigrés in Egypt were circulated widely in Beirut and the Mountain. For example, *al-Muqtataf,* which was established by Yaᶜqub Sarraf and Faris Nimr, and *al-Hilal,* which was founded by Jirji Zaidan, were two commonly read magazines that published articles on "modern" knowledge of science and literature. On a larger scale, an encyclopedia was compiled and published in periodical parts by Butrus al-Bustani throughout the 1870s and 1880s. Regardless of the duration of any particular publication, the sheer volume of printed issues points to a substantial and dedicated readership. And—as we will see later in this chapter—this press, like its counterpart in the *mahjar,* was regularly engaged in discussions about "modernity" by the time emigrants began steaming back into the port of Beirut.

On the economic side, some changes had also taken place. Villages and towns were prospering thanks in large part to the influx of money from the *mahjar,* which accounted for about half of the annual income of the Mountain. Beirut continued to blossom as a commercial center, and tourism was emerging as a new industry (which catered mainly to Egyptian elites), even as industry and agriculture languished because of the befuddled economic policy of the administration of the Mountain. Roads—which were meant to support the tourist trade and extend the control of the central government—had been built throughout the mountains surrounding the coastal cities. By 1917 over eleven hundred kilometers of roads snaked across the face of the mountains.[23] Coupled with faster carriage service, these roads allowed for more connections between city and village. They transported people, goods, and ideas more frequently and swiftly between the two worlds and thus brought them closer than they had been before.

But more apparent—and more familiar to emigrants—than any of these changes were those in the realm of society. By the time emigrants began their influx into the Mountain, most of these changes were visibly centered in the city of Beirut. Like other major cities in the Ottoman Empire, Beirut was undergoing a transformation in its landscape that was emblematic of the rise of a new urbanized middle class.[24] This change was easily apparent to emigrants as they came into the port of Beirut. Scanning the horizons of the city, they would have noticed that most of the roofs were gleaming red as opposed to the prevalent flat roofs that they had last seen ten or twelve years before as they departed for the Americas. Moreover, their eyes would have had to range over a larger space to see the new suburbs that had emerged in their absence. After disembarking, they would come to know the names of these as Achrafiyeh, Ras el-Naba^{c}a, Mazra^{c}a, and Ras Beyrouth. The growth of these districts had come about to accommodate the swelling of the population of the city from 80,000 in 1880 to 110,000 in 1906. And these newcomers were mostly members of a middle class of professionals, artisans, clerks, and salaried employees. Thus, as May Davie argues, the city had been transformed in this process from a medieval Arab-Islamic city to a "ville bourgeoise méditerranéenne."[25] As we shall see later in this chapter, the more intimate manifestations of this process at the level of gender and family are the ones which would have struck returning emigrants as familiar.

Leaving behind the city and climbing up to their villages, the emigrants discovered that even there things were not what they had imagined them

to be while in the *mahjar.* "Home" was the poverty of the place with its dirt roads and small hovels. It was the "coarse" clothes on the backs of their peasant relatives. It was the lack of running water, outhouses, and other amenities that they had encountered during their recent sojourns in New York or Rio de Janeiro. Contrasted with their fresh memories of the metropolis, these visions must have been disappointing at some level; a disappointment that was made more profound by the pastoral images they had painted of "home" while in the *mahjar.* Such feelings produced a sense of dislocation because they highlighted how much these emigrants had changed. Panama hats and shorter dresses, dangling gold watches and new coifs were signs of that change. But that was not all. The peasants who had stayed in the Mountain were also different. All had gotten older, some had married and even had children, others had passed away, still others may have gotten poorer or richer, and a few may have moved to a different village. Socially, many disputes and arguments had taken place, and the topography of power and authority had changed over time. Most certainly there would have been some element of jealousy and resentment toward the "newcomers" who flaunted their financial comfort. These feelings combined to make the meeting of returning emigrants and resident peasants far more awkward than anticipated by anyone involved in the communal celebrations. Such awkwardness meant that most returned emigrants would come at various times to the realization that they had to forge new places for themselves in the communities they left behind, just as they had to previously establish a niche for themselves in "American" society.

Although the process of defining that "place" was carried out in a great many different ways, a few stand out as common denominators among the experiences of most returned emigrants. These included the houses that emigrants built, the clothes they wore, the food they ate, the way they raised their children, and how men and women behaved. Into all these matters emigrants introduced the mannerisms and traditions that they had developed in the *mahjar* and which resonated with the elements of an emerging middle class in Beirut. Consciously or otherwise, they had brought back with them things they thought they were leaving behind. And these clearly set them apart as different. This difference was further accentuated by the mixture of disdain and envy with which many villagers and townspeople reacted to these "innovations."

Internally and externally, then, many of the returned emigrants were coming to be lumped together as a new social class that was distinct from the peasant society out of which it grew and altogether different from

the upper classes of Beirut; in other words, they were drawing together into a middling class of sorts. Parts of the framework of this class were already put in place by those who previously made money within the silk industry and by those who had newly settled in Beirut. However, return emigrants greatly expanded the reach of that class as they surged back to the Mountain. Their sheer number coupled with their newly acquired wealth expanded the numbers of the middle class from a sprinkling in some towns to a ubiquitous presence in almost all the villages of Lebanon—a phenomenon that was not common at that time in Egypt, Syria, Iran, or Turkey. Moreover, in their desire to make others cognizant of their struggle overseas, they surrounded themselves with material wealth and cosmopolitan airs. These elements made the boundaries of the coalescing social class sharper than had ever been before. In these ways the returning emigrants left their indelible mark on the middle class. To understand this process and its inherent tensions, we need to turn now to its details.

The House

Like Polish, Greek, and Italian return emigrants, one of the first and most common elements that came to distinguish those Lebanese emigrants who came back from their kinsfolk and fellow villagers was the house they built for themselves.[26] Invariably, the returnees chose to build for themselves a house that was bigger and more ornate than any other in the village—save, perhaps, for that of another, wealthier emigrant. Undoubtedly, part of the reason for such expenditure was the returnees' desire to display their financial success. In addition, having experienced—even if from visual encounters instead of actual residence—better housing, emigrants were loathe to live in the old hovel. But there were other aspects of themselves that returned emigrants, for conscious reasons or rather more submerged ones, wanted to show. In design and function their new houses were partly a reflection of their new self-images and social habits, which they had piled on top of the old ones. To illustrate this point we need to look at the house as historical artifact.

In order to fully understand the historical significance of the new "emigrant house," we have to digress a bit and look at the "traditional" house in the village. Throughout the greater part of the nineteenth century, most peasant families lived in a one- or two-room hovel whose walls were

made of the local ubiquitous stone and whose flat roof was a combination of timber logs and packed dirt. One of the rooms was used to keep the animals in during the winter, and the other served as living, cooking, eating, and sleeping space. This room was sparsely furnished with a few mattresses, a portable brazier, and maybe a chest of drawers if the peasant was well-off. There were few cooking utensils; most of them were built in, and the rest were manufactured locally. Storage space for the few utensils and linens was shelves built into the walls.[27] Bread, the main ingredient in the peasants' diet, was baked on a *tannour*[28] that was located right outside the house.

Architecturally, the peasants' houses were hardly appealing. Most travelers, except for those whose eyes were clouded by thick romantic notions about the Holy Land, remarked at the misery of peasant abodes.[29] For instance, in 1860 David Urquhart described the house where he had to spend one night as a crowded hovel that contained a few "potteries" and little else. He went on to state that "the rest of the villages in this area were, if not worse, no better than the state of this village."[30] And F. Bart lamented that "these habitations [of peasants] could afford a splendid view. But practically all [of these houses] have only one room, without a window, which serves all the needs of the home."[31] Late-nineteenth-century photographs of villages (and not just individual houses) in the Mountain confirm that—to some extent—these statements did not simply express the unflattering personal views of European sojourners. Moreover, these observations are not surprising in view of the fact that a peasant's house was built by members of his family who had little if any experience in masonry. Stones were selected to fit on top of each other as tightly as possible without much shaping since the tools and expertise necessary for constructing tight-fitting walls were not readily available to the fellah. In addition, if a house was built without interior supports, the dimensions were limited to a mere twenty square meters, a space that was barely adequate for four people. To construct a larger house, peasants had to use wooden beams or pillars of stone. However, both of these materials were extremely expensive. Wood was becoming a precious commodity in the Mountain, as silk factories had consumed tons of wood to fire up their spinning machines.[32] Even when a peasant could afford it, the space added was only six square meters. And while stone pillars added much more space, the cost of constructing this larger space was much higher than most peasants could afford.[33]

Aside from being larger versions of this typical house, the homes of wealthier peasants and even of many of the *shuyukh* were only different

in two ways: content and location. These wealthier homes may have contained a big iron bed, many more pillows, a cupboard or two, some wooden trunks, and a low table.[34] While a few items, like the bed, were imitations of European possessions common in Beirut, most of the other possessions were "traditional" household goods. Such contents marked their owners as rich and elite members of peasant society but hardly as "modern" in the European sense. Another distinguishing factor was the location of the house within the general layout of a particular village. The most influential members of the village occupied its central part, while poorer ones lived at the periphery. For example, in the village of ᶜAmmatur, the two main clans of ᶜAbd as-Samad and Abu-Shaqra occupied the center of the village, while the lower class Druzes and Christians lived at the periphery of the village, and an outcast Christian-Muslim couple had to live at a considerable distance from the village.[35] This visual rendition of social hierarchy immediately clued visitors to the locus of power and directed them to the house where they could expect the greatest amount of hospitality.

A decade or two after Urquhart's visit to Lebanon (1870–1880), money from silk was showing up in—among other things—slightly better homes for wealthier peasants.[36] The large, single, and multipurpose living space was no longer sufficient, nor was the proximity to animals desirable. The first change in the construction of peasant houses was the adoption of two-level rectangular houses, with the lower level reserved for the animals. The physical separation of living and service areas terminated the cohabitation of human and animal. One observer saw this shift as "symbolizing man's emancipation from unremitting toil."[37] Even if we do not subscribe to such dramatic views, we can still argue that this physical elevation was meant as an indication of a social rise above the general peasantry. The way these new types of houses were constructed confirms this point. While the lower level of the house—or the reserve of animals and the *tannour*—was still a crude construction of stone walls and dirt ceiling, the second level was a different affair altogether. Reserved for people, the upper level displayed better masonry work and consisted of a bigger room with a couple of slightly larger windows. One door on that level let out to the road and another to the roof of the lower level which served in the summer as a terrace.[38] Yet, despite the larger dimensions, the living space of the family was essentially the same as that in older and poorer houses in that it was multipurpose. In other words, the same physical space served as a communal sitting room, eating area, and—at the end of the day—sleeping area. Thus, we can fairly conclude that the first eighty

or so years of the nineteenth century were marked by slow changes in the architecture, interior design, and functions of the Lebanese house.

The following thirty years were different. Emigrant money funded the most rapid and dramatic transformation of that house at every level, creating in the process the "central-hall house." This was long assumed to be the Lebanese house par excellence, and it is etched into the collective memory as a national icon whose roots derive from the "Mountain"—and to a much lesser extent from the Phoenician past.[39] In fact, rather than simply emanating from the Mountain, these houses were emigrant adaptations of the mansions of the upper bourgeoisie of Beirut. In turn, this style was an earlier extroversion of the Arab-Islamic interior, which dominated the mountain houses mixed with Italian and French material and ornamentation. Moreover, these edifices—while remaining unique in some ways—were part of a Levantine bourgeois architecture that was emerging around the same time throughout the Eastern Mediterranean.[40] For example, Zeynep Çelik speaks of similar architecture and of the integration of "western appliqué façades on traditional interiors," which was remaking the elite houses in Istanbul.[41] Put another way, the "central-hall house" was a dialectical outcome of the various cultural currents that ran through Beirut and into the Mountain villages. These came from the Ottoman *metropole,* from the peasant villages, and through Italian and French architects and builders.

Regardless of their roots, these houses stood in the villages of the Mountain as unambiguous and impressive testaments to the wealth and status of their owners—returning emigrants. As Friedrich Ragette commented rather dramatically about architecture in the Lebanese village, "Towards the end of the nineteenth century . . . the houses turned into veritable villas . . . majestically dominating their surroundings."[42] Ranging between 140 and 200 square meters (and sometimes reaching palatial dimensions with 300 square meters of floor space), these *harat* (as they were called) were larger than any of the older houses. Beyond size, the striking elevated triple-arch motif of the central hall—which included two ornate windows that framed the door—made these houses stand out among the plain façades of the older homes. Finally, the *coup de grâce* was the signature red-tiled roof, which stood out ever so dramatically against the green and brown surroundings.

Digging a little deeper, we find that from their foundations these *harat* were different from their poorer cousins. Many of these houses (some of which are still standing today) show in their details that construction was assigned to local professional masons. The stones for the walls were better

dressed and arranged, and the ceiling was sometimes sealed with *trabé franjié* ("European soil"), or cement.[43] More interesting, this elaborate variation included arches within the house. Each set of arches was called *habl qanater,* or a "cord of arches," and the house could contain one, two, or three such cords depending on the wealth of the family.[44] Functionally, these arches improved the insulation of the house, which was also enhanced by the new way that the walls were constructed. These new walls, which could be as thick as one meter, were generally constructed as two separate walls with dirt filled in between them.[45] The outside wall was made of carefully selected stones, called *mdamik,* that were shaped to fit on top of each other without the need for mortar and with the joints barely apparent. Alternating sandstone and limestone (the limestone being used in façades exposed to the winter rains or in more load-bearing areas) created a most pleasing decorative effect that contrasted with the monotonous exterior of older homes.

Ornamental designs in windows, shutters, and porticos distanced this house even further from its plain cubic neighbors. Doors and their frames incorporated moldings and carvings that made them more attractive than the old doors, which consisted of pieces of wood nailed together. On a more cosmetic level, windows with paned glass as well as wooden shutters became more common, and ornamental glazed circular windows were placed near the top of walls in order to infuse the inside with a multitude of colors. In 1890 these changes were just emerging, as observed in a French report: "today the use of glass windows is being generalized very quickly."[46] Its author went on to estimate the amount of window glass imported yearly at 450,000 square feet, at an average cost of 1,400 piasters per 100 square feet.[47] By 1911 we find that the importation of window glass had surpassed the million-square-foot mark.[48] It would appear from these numbers that returning emigrants wanted the power to see and to be seen—when they chose—from within the private space of their distinct houses.

Ultimately, however, the most visually striking sign of emigrant wealth appeared on the roof. Imported brilliant red tiles covered the new slanted roofs, which contrasted strongly with the traditional flat roofs of peasant homes. These blushes of wealth became popular and common enough that while in 1887 one million red tiles were imported from France, five years later this figure had doubled, and by 1911 it had crossed the five-million mark.[49] Although many of these tiles were destined for houses being built in Beirut, a large proportion made their way to the villages of Mount Lebanon as observed by various contemporaries. For example, Ernest Weakley, a British parliamentarian who was writing in 1911 about

commerce in Mount Lebanon, commented that "all new households in Beirut as well as in the villages on the Lebanon are covered with the bright red foreign article [tiles]."[50] Ravndal was more explicit in his observation of this phenomenon: "When it is considered that there is hardly a village in the most remote parts of the Lebanon that has not at least 2 or 3 new houses with tiled roofs and that even whole villages have been thus constructed—the amount of money diverted from America and permanently invested in Syria can be easily recognized."[51] These observations are all the more dramatic when one takes into account the fact that until the late 1870s "one could hardly find a single red-tiled roof in the Mountain."[52]

Changes were as dramatic—albeit less public—on the inside of these emigrant homes. Floors were covered with mosaic tiles, sanitary fixtures and equipment were added, and better heating stoves were installed. Most notably, large multipurpose space gave way to a number of smaller rooms with a specific use for each. Although there were some differences from one house to the next, in general the floor plan remained quite similar. The main door opened unto an entry hall that led straight ahead to a central hall—hence the name of this design. This central hall was the main living room and reception area for guests; this much of the basic design was the same as that of "traditional" and poorer peasant homes. However, additional rooms (the number of which depended on the size of the house) branched off to the side of the entryway. These rooms dramatically altered the layout of the house by creating specialized spaces that had never really existed before. One of these was the kitchen, and the others were the bedrooms. Each of the bedrooms had a door that—when closed—effectively isolated the happenings in that room from the rest of the family life. In other words, a more distinct sense of privacy derived from the design of these houses. This privacy separated guests (in the central hall) from the occupants of the house who—for whatever reason—were in their bedrooms. Equally, the "modern" interior separated the parents' room from that of the children, and then again the boys from the girls.

Because of the enlargement and subdivision of space, the house acquired different types of furniture. The few mattresses which seated and slept the whole peasant family were no longer enough for all of the bedrooms as well as the living room. Beds—complete with iron frames—had to be purchased for the bedrooms; cushions, a sofa, and a couple of chairs were placed in the central hall. The increased demand for Western-style furniture translated into a rise in the number of imported chairs. While in 1868 only twelve thousand items of furniture were imported, during

the 1890s eighty thousand chairs *en bois courbé* (of curved, or bent, wood) alone were imported yearly to Beirut and Mount Lebanon. Iron beds were another big import item by the end of the 1890s. In 1887, for instance, more than thirteen thousand English-made iron beds were imported to Beirut, with about a third destined for the villagers in the mountains.[53] Two decades later, the figures had doubled.[54] Demand for these goods finally propelled some local companies to build *franji* furniture. Early on in the twentieth century, these companies were advertising their wares in most of the popular newspapers, like *Lubnan*. One local manufacturer of furniture placed the following advertisement:

> Al-Suyufi Factory: [We] manufacture and sell in it all kinds of furniture . . . like armoires with mirrors, sinks of all kinds, buffets, and dining tables . . . drapes and coffee tables, hall trees . . . sofas and chairs, etc.[55]

Other local stores were opened to sell a greater number of imported luxury goods. For instance, no fewer than three separate stores advertised the availability of clocks, armoires, and sofas at their various outlets in the Mountain. Since advertising was still fairly uncommon in Lebanon in the 1910s, we can appreciate that there were many other stores which did not advertise yet which were selling the same wares.

Inside the armoires emigrants hung their *franji* clothes. Gone were the days when a peasant could not don the clothes of a *shaykh* without fear of retribution.[56] By the turn of the twentieth century the Lebanese middle class bought whatever fashion they could (and in some instances, could not) afford. The styles, as one *zajaliya* (popular poem) recorded, were distinctly different from those of the peasants—and of the *shuyukh,* for that matter. For the "little ones" there was:

> a blue suit with buttons
> and each button costing sixty *misriyya*
> On the waist there must be a leather
> Belt, according to the latest in fashion
> And a straw hat with
> A band all around
> And an ironed collar
> And a tied neck-tie

Women, the poet continued in his laments, were even more "lavish."

> I want a short corset
> And two dresses that are tasteful

I want a jeweled comb
And I want earrings and a choker
The hat costs four liras
And the dress is from heavy wool
And a raincoat that
has no equal in the country[57]

Men wore their Panama hats, leather boots, and waistcoats with a gold watch dangling from a pocket.

Such was the demand for these luxury items that by the first decade of the twentieth century stores catering to these acquired tastes had spread throughout the larger cities of the Mountain. One of those, located in Beirut (where most of these stores were established), was Bon Marché, which advertised among its wares "parasols, pantaloons, handkerchiefs . . . perfumes and powders . . . fans . . . etc."[58] While it was rare to find similar stores with finished goods in the larger towns of Dayr al-Qamar, Jubayl, Brummana, Zahleh, and Batrun, all had *franji* tailors. For instance, by end of the nineteenth century, there were five such tailors in Dayr al-Qamar, and, more tellingly, a provincial city like Jubayl boasted of seven tailors who catered to the surrounding villages.[59] Even smaller and more distant towns like Brummana, Bsherri, and Jezzine could count on one or two tailors in their areas.[60] All advertised themselves as capable of clothing men and women in the latest European fashion.

Amidst this "modern" wardrobe there was increasingly little room for the *sirwal* (peasant pants) and *labbada* (wool peasant hat) or for the geometric tattoos on the arms and faces of women. By wearing *franji* clothes, the rural middle class used their bodies to display their wealth, sophistication, and social difference. When this effort is considered along with the emergence of the *harat,* it should become clear that the members of this social group (dominated, as it was, by emigrants) worked hard to distinguish themselves from their poorer peasant neighbors through their novel styles of sitting, eating, sleeping, and dressing. Although these efforts at contrast stretched over years of history, they are nonetheless striking. Even as emigrants, these people had consciously and anxiously wanted to come back to their villages; once there they were equally desirous to distance themselves from the social milieu. In the *mahjar* they had elevated peasant life to romantic heights, but upon their return they shunned its "traditional" reality for their version of "modernity." This simultaneous presence in the village and distance from its poorer inhabitants was a source of tension that exaggerated the social stratification

within the village, a stratification already begun in part by commercialization of silk and the establishment of silk factories.

The growing distance between the peasants and the rural middle class becomes more apparent when we compare the social spaces of the "traditional" and the "modern" house. Before the 1890s (and even afterward in peasant houses), working and living spaces in the villages were almost indistinct visually and, for most of the year, functionally.[61] People, animals, work, and play intermeshed across the physical boundaries of the house. Women worked on raising their silkworms inside the house to add to the income of their families; lentils were spread on the flat roofs to dry them for the winter; and chickens and goats were brought in in the winter to safeguard the family's investment from the harsh weather. The roofs—built in close proximity to each other—were also a physical space; there women socialized with each other and participated in the public life of the village. Moreover, the dark and cramped interior of older peasant homes encouraged women to spend most of their time outside the house. In sum, the "traditional" house of the peasant was an integral part of the overall socioeconomic texture of the village and the fabric of daily life.

However, the *ʿatbeh* (threshold) of the *harat* pushed the internal life of a family into a more isolated sphere. Animals did not meander in, nor was it necessary to bring them in during the winter nights—they had their "stable" beneath the house. And while women continued to work within the house, their labors were no longer remunerated financially in any direct way. Cooking, cleaning, and raising children still went on behind the walls of the house, but *sitt al-bayt* (the lady of the house) did not need to raise silkworms. (This is ironic since many of these women had worked in the *mahjar* to help the family accumulate its money.) In addition, the new design also served to curtail *sitt al-bayt*'s social interactions in the public sphere. Women in the emigrant household no longer had to go to the *ʿayn* in the village to get water; either their servants did that, or water was brought much closer to the house. Cooking, normally an outdoor activity, was brought into the added kitchen, where more complicated and time-consuming meals were prepared. Finally, the beautiful pyramid of red tiles which topped these houses made it most impractical to climb on top of the roofs. Altogether, then, and in contrast to the "traditional" peasant abode the "central-hall house" afforded women fewer possibilities to go outside.

Isolating them further was the fact that the *ʿatbeh* also symbolized the division between those who owned the land and those who worked for them. One anecdote told about the wealthy Habib Doumani family from

the town of Dayr al-Qamar dramatizes this separation. One day, "*Sitt* [Lady] Sa^{c}ada [Habib's wife] was bothered when she saw tens of *shuraka^{c}* peasants [workers on the landowner's land] entering her house with their muddied boots dirtying her white and red tiles, and she complained of the matter to her husband."[62] Not always nor in every new household was the separation so distinct. Yet the division was obvious all over the Mountain since most of the returned emigrants ceased to work on their land (as we will discuss later). It was all the more apparent as the sons (and some daughters, as we will also see later in this chapter) of these same emigrants were sent off to school while the youth of their peasant neighbors were busy tilling the fields. Thus, women of the *harat* could no longer easily intermingle with women of lesser financial stature, as all such relations had an undertow of unequal social power. One need not exaggerate the extent of this distinction to realize that it furthered the stratification of the village society even as—and because—it pushed middle-class women into a more distinguishable private sphere.

Womanhood

Affirming this "modern" ideal of an insular life for middle-class women—a model that the emigrants had encountered and engaged in the *mahjar*—was a localized cult of domesticity which had been, and was still being, enunciated in Beirut. From the 1880s onward, numerous newspapers and magazines and the authors of various books and speeches were engaged in the project of inventing a universal "woman." Readers and listeners were instructed that "all that is inside the house is relegated in its administration to the woman just as all external affairs are the domain of the man."[63] Such a created "tradition" needed ideological underpinnings to justify its existence and to make it appear as old as time and as natural as the air. Thus, it was infused with the utmost importance. One author, in highlighting that importance, wrote that women are the moral pillar of the family—and by extension the nation—because "there are none like them in organizing society and safeguarding its order and morals, because they are the *goddesses of their families and homes*."[64] This deification is quite startling when it was still common at the time for male peasants to refer to their wives as "The House" or "Our Paternal Cousin"[65] and when mentioning a woman's given name sent the husband into apologetic contortions for fear of offending the listener.

As the host of articles in women's magazines and newspapers constantly reminded their readers, women were not quite to the point of being "goddesses of their families and homes." One woman wrote, in an open letter to her bride-seeking son, "You asked me to find you an appropriate girl to be a partner in your life . . . for you want a rational, energetic and capable wife, and these qualities I have not found in an Eastern young woman."[66] In this one paragraph the writer created the model of "womanhood" to which "Eastern" women must aspire. Injecting the division of the world into two distinct spheres of "East" and "West" into her discourse on womanhood, this writer deftly linked "modernity" and the "woman" through the general qualities of knowledge, energy, and capability. And in every instance she found the "Eastern" young woman wanting.

To rise to these levels, the middle-class woman had to follow numerous novel ways. From breastfeeding children to setting a table, from using antiseptic hygiene to different social manners, and from comforting her husband to speaking at appropriate times, the "modern" woman had to jump through many hoops in order to reach her social peak. Advice in all these matters was abundant. For example, Ibrahim Bayk al-Aswad dedicated ten pages in his almanac—which ran through four editions between 1906 and 1910—to the act of breastfeeding. Shunning the "outmoded and unscientific" methods of yesteryear, *he* recommended the following regimen: "While breastfeeding her baby a mother should remain seated while supporting her back with a pillow . . . and for her [the mother's] comfort and that of her infant she needs to organize the times of breastfeeding in the first few weeks so that [she breastfeeds] once every two hours for 10 to 12 minutes only, and at night . . . she should give him the breast around 4 o'clock in the afternoon and allow him to eat enough and not breastfeed him again till the morning."[67]

Undaunted by the prospects of engorged breasts and crying hungry infants at night, the same author goes on to provide equally "scientific" advice for weaning a baby. At nine months, he wrote, a baby should be weaned according to the following formula:

> 7 A.M.—12 tablespoons of milk and one tablespoon of cream and teaspoon of sugar mixed with 3 tablespoons of water;
>
> 10:30 A.M.—milk, sugar and water as in the preceding and 2 teaspoons of "mellin" food dissolved in warm water and added to the milk
>
> 2 P.M.—as was fed at 10:30 A.M.
>
> 6 P.M.—as was fed at 10:30 A.M.
>
> 7 P.M.—as was fed at 7 A.M.[68]

He proceeded to detail the feeding schedule for infants from ten to fourteen months, fourteen to eighteen months, and finally from eighteen months to the end of the second year. Variations of such demanding schedules were also recommended in articles published in women's magazines.[69] No doubt they were intended to reduce infant mortality and to produce healthier children. Nonetheless, they placed a great burden on the mother—and the mother alone—to attend to the welfare of her child.[70]

One woman's magazine, *al-Hasna*ʾ, expounded at large on the "principles in raising children." One of its articles listed eight ways to ensure the health of a child:

1. Children are to be given the best room in the house
2. The room has to be large with many windows so that it will allow sun and air to come in easily
3. They must sleep early and they need no less than 10 hours of sleep
4. They have to spend two hours outside the house to get fresh air and they must never be exposed to cold air unless they are wearing clothes that protects them from it
5. They must be encouraged [to engage] in athletic [activity] that strengthens the body and to practice . . . regularly and in an orderly fashion
6. They need to eat at a table special for them until they reach the age of 10, and food should be heavy at lunch and light for dinner
7. They should refrain from eating sweets and doughy food and unripe fruits and all that badly affects digestion
8. They must not be exposed to exciting subject matter such as murder, wiliness and other very dangerous events[71]

To implement such rigorous rules necessitated access to money and facilities that only the middle class could hope to have. But, more important, these rules presented a radically different approach to raising children. Unlike their peasant cousins, these children were to be protected as much as possible from the roughness of life. While peasant boys and girls started working in the fields from the age of six, children of the *harat* were to be spared deleterious exposure to work, cold weather, damp air, and violence. A "good" mother would also attend to her children's education. She needed—according to the same "experts"—to sit beside them every evening to help them with their homework and to read to them. In sum, the middle-class mother's task was to shelter and guide her children so that they would grow up to be healthy young men and women who could then contribute better to society. This is the same enthusiastic sentiment that

was concurrently running through the discourse of social reformers in Iran and Egypt. For example, in his *Murshid al-amin lil-banat wal-banin,* Rifaᶜa al-Tahtawi stated that educating Egyptian women was important because it "prepares [them] to raise their children well. . . . That children should be given a sound . . . *tarbiyya* [education/upbringing] is of enormous social consequence."[72]

This process of defining women within the context of a household—albeit a gilded one—was not limited to their role as "modern" mothers. Additionally, a middle-class woman was expected to manage her house properly. *Al-Hasna*ᵓ editorialized that "a lady must know the principles of this art [management of the house] and work according to them because she is . . . the manager of its affairs. And it [the home] is the mirror of her works and the proof of her taste, her hard work, and the guide to her emotions; . . . this is particularly important because home life influences the morals and shapes personalities."[73] *Al-Hasna*ᵓ subsequently dedicated close to a third of its pages to ensuring that its women readers approached these ideals of "modern" femininity. One article, for example, spoke about the new ways of washing clothes; another expounded on the effects of kohl, eyeliners, and powders ("heavy make-up is deleterious for the health of your skin"); and a three-page article described the "scientific" method for cleaning ("to rid the house of germs and vermin").[74]

Under the title "Managing the House," the same magazine instructed:

Put a little ammonia in a bowl and immerse in it a piece of soft cloth and rub the jewelry with it vigorously then dry it with another piece of cloth and polish it well. Ammonia also cleans leather gloves and silk textiles from spots and removes from black silken and woolen clothes the reddishness which is caused when citric liquids falls upon them. . . . Silver utensils and dinnerware which are used during mealtimes must be washed with water and pure white soap and dried very well with an old soft towel and polished twice a week with white soft *esfidaj* mixed with alcohol . . . and if the silver has black spots that are not removed by rubbing with *esfidaj* then rub it with piece of flannel cloth wetted with citric acid and then polish it. If you want another way . . .[75]

Fatat Lubnan, another women's magazine, went further in stating the importance of such laborious tasks. It preached that "the proper management of the house is not limited [in its benefits] to the comfort of the family, but goes beyond it to the happiness of the nation, its wealth, dignity, and sovereignty."[76]

Finally, a woman's role—women were told, mostly by male writers—included catering to the needs and desires of the "man of the house-

hold." Many writers argued that women could do so only if they avoided such "trivialities" as reading romance novels and attending parties, and paid greater attention to the more "meaningful" things in life. Among these consequential matters they listed cooking proper meals, setting a good table, carefully managing expenses, and making sure the children were clean and well kept. In taking care of all these matters, a woman would simply be acting out her proper role as a helpmate for her husband because "she and she alone can . . . help him in his business and affairs even if she did not have a direct hand in them or knowledge about them." If she performed these "duties" with a smile, and if she did not complain or "gripe," the house would be a source of contentment and rejuvenation for the husband.[77] Even more liberal commentators listed similar conditions for a happy home. Elias Tweyni, who expounded at length and in several articles about giving women respect and rights, wrote, "It is important to give a woman the rights that support her elevated status within the family because she [the woman] is the real helper for it [the family] and her husband, for God has created her for this purpose and she is capable of helping her husband and supporting him in his work."[78]

In an article entitled "The Woman's Kingdom: A Discourse on Domestic Politics," one author summed up these various elements of a "modern" middle-class woman's life. "Making husband and child happy must be the main purpose behind the efforts of every woman who deserves to be described as feminine. . . . Yes, ladies, this [longing looks from the husband and kisses from the children] is the only thing that brings us happiness, we women; . . . and it does not come easily and without trouble . . . but rather it comes through a path full of exertion and difficulties, [where we] deny ourselves and shun our interests in favor of the welfare of those around us."[79] It all amounted to a large sacrifice of a woman's individuality in order to nurture that of her husband and children. This ideal (and we will question its reality in a following chapter) was notably different from the sacrifice of peasant women, who were not quite so alone in subsuming their own interests to that of the family. Although the level of sacrifice among rural families was hardly distributed equally among their members, husband and wife and children all worked for the survival of the family. The possibilities for individual self-expression were limited by the dearth of financial and educational resources. Across the class divide, the "goddesses" of the house stood far more alone and shouldered the greater burden of life's sacrifices. Like middle-class women in Istanbul or Teheran, these women were asked to

forego the homosocial life which had sustained their grandmothers and mothers because it was threatening to the new social order in which women were the "special, almost exclusive agents of what has been called the relations of social reproduction."[80] Making this isolation more poignant was the fact that these middle-class women gazed on a larger spectrum of alternative lives across the growing distance between "private" and "public." They knew about those possibilities and were expected to help their husbands and children attain them, at the same time that they were expected to recede further into a lonely existence. In that sense their sacrifice was as mentally painful as the hardships which peasant women lived with every day were physically painful.

Education

But women had to accept this trying shift in responsibilities, and they had to be prepared to accomplish all the tasks that it entailed. Even if some women embraced these new duties, others who had traveled to and worked in the *mahjar* would have been loathe to being shunted so readily into what must have appeared to be an isolated and stilted life-style. This reluctance is apparent to us from the recurring complaints by middle-class reformers about women's insistence on "frivolous" socialization and from the innumerable articles that were meant to make women "better" mothers, wives, and managers of their households. Because of this reluctance, many contemporaries argued that constructing the "new woman" required the education of the younger generation of women. On this premise, they engaged the debate about this issue; a debate that began in the 1870s and was still going strong by World War I. Hence, we have the emphatic and very "motherly" statement by one contemporary who wrote, "Breastfeeding them [women] the milks of science is as important a duty as breastfeeding an infant, and as necessary as water is for plants."[81] And another expressed the same idea in a few lines of poetry:

> Teach her she will be succor of happiness
> Succor of family and children
> Let her know she is the source of good
> The basis of wealth and happiness[82]

Less poetic, but more direct, was the affirmation in 1909 by the editor of a woman's magazine:

Rearing [children] is the primary duty of a woman, given that God has singled her out with natural inclination [toward child raising] and what social traditions dictate. . . . So that she can perform this primary duty . . . she needs to be prepared for that with learning and schooling and to continue to follow the latest opinions . . . and these are the most important necessities for every mother who wishes the well-being of her children, and there is not a mother in the world who does not.[83]

These ideas meandered from the pages of magazines and newspapers into the ideological foundations of girls' schools. For instance, during the dedication of the Friends' School for Girls in Brummana, the principal, Eli Jones, "spoke for one and a quarter hours on the subject of female education—and was translated into Arabic."[84] His talk centered around the notion of providing women with an education to make them better companions for men.[85]

The content of girls' education was geared toward that function. One writer expounded on this matter by stating that "among the most important of the sciences that women must learn is the art of managing the house because she needs to know how to organize her home and its affairs and its needs such as cooking, baking, cleaning the furniture and setting a proper table." In addition, along with rudimentary knowledge of geography and history, it was deemed necessary to teach a woman to read so that she could peruse literary books and newspapers, "in order to amuse herself during the long idle hours and to benefit her children with knowledge," as well as to provide better companionship for her husband.[86] A few writers even thought it of the utmost importance to teach women about hygiene, nursing, and "even physiology" so that they could take better care of their children's health. Finally, women were to learn proper "home economics" in order to make their husbands' income stretch further. Quoting Benjamin Franklin, one self-appointed arbiter of women's tasks wrote, "Fear spendthriftiness for the smallest holes sink the largest ships."[87]

*Al-Hasna*ʾ and other women's journals dedicated page after page to this same subject.[88] But *Fatat Lubnan* was the most adamant in its pronouncements about this issue. In one of many articles the editor, Salima Abi Rashid, proclaimed that the cause for the "great gap between the peoples of the West and the peoples of the East [is the relative knowledge of] home economics. Their learning has made them dominate everything and our ignorance has made us dominated by everything, so they have power over truths and fantasies have power us." Such a "sorry state of affairs" could be resolved only by imitating the curriculum which young girls in Europe were receiving in their schools. At length she wrote,

In elementary schools girl students receive lessons in the art of cooking . . . as well as in washing clothes and ironing it according to the most modern of ways, and managing the house and cleaning it, and in avoiding the ill-effects of toilets and chimneys and in disinfecting it, and other lessons in the principles of safeguarding health and caring for children, and in the ways of treating illnesses and dealing with sudden emergencies [until] the doctor arrives, and lessons in the science of home economics, and in correlating between income and expenditures.[89]

She concluded her critique of Lebanese society by pleading that "[our] life has become corrupted to such an extent that it is feared that our social structure will descend to such a stage as to make it impossible to ever rise again. And this corrupted life cannot be changed except by educating the girl."[90] Articles in other magazines agreed—albeit in a less passionate and dramatic tone—that "proper" young girls must be prepared to play the roles of middle-class wives and mothers within the boundaries of middle-class houses.

This circular construction, where gender roles define class, and class implies particular gender roles, was given urgency through links to the wider political spectrum of "nation" and its confrontation with a dominating "West." Thus, making a "nation" was inextricably linked with producing good mothers; one could not be attained without the other—at least according to some. This strategy was similar to the one that was employed by other middle classes of colonized "nations," be they in China, South Asia, or other parts of the "Orient." For example, Tani Barlow argues that female writers in China presented the same argument in demanding changes in the status of women in the 1890s and 1910s. One of these writers asked, "Why isn't China strong? Because there are no persons of talent. Why are there no persons of talent? Because women do not prosper."[91] Similarly, and around the same time, some Iranian intellectuals situated the need for women's education within the political struggle between an "East" and a "West." Arguing that education is necessary for the preparation of the "woman" for her role as a manager of the household, one writer noted that "even in household management women of Europe and America have surpassed those of Asia. . . . Nations that have mothers like European women can conquer other lands and rule over other nations."[92] So it was in Lebanon, as in these other places, that the "modern woman" became essentialized into an ideal type whose role in bringing up children and serving her husband was a prerequisite for an independent nation that would be equal to the "West" and able to repel its domination.[93]

The evangelical emphasis on the role young women had to play in lifting Lebanese society—and neighboring ones, as other scholars have pointed out—from its corruption was made all the more impressive by the absence of any such a role for boys. For them there were no lessons in "home economics," table manners, sewing, or anything of the sort. Rather, as told by H. J. Turtle, in Protestant schools, "boys are trained in all the useful branches of education, and some to trades. They go out as teachers . . . , and also as clerks and apprentices in merchant's offices and factories in Beirut."[94] Catholic schools (which were concerned about "losing" Lebanese boys to other missionaries) also changed their curriculum to provide a more practical education, greatly deemphasizing religious instruction in the process. Writing in 1866, the director of the Jesuit school in Ghazir observed that ᶜAintoura—a rival school run by the Lazarists—"is a *nursery* [i.e., school] for young men who want to take up commercial or industrial careers."[95] The Jesuits soon followed suit in providing such a new curriculum, which was implemented in all the schools under their direction.[96] Finally, one finds that all the institutions for higher education catered to young men—of good social means—and produced doctors and lawyers who added to the ranks of the professional middle class. (The Université Saint Joseph and its rival, the Syrian Protestant College—later known as the American University of Beirut—were two such institutions, and it was not until the aftermath of World War I that women were allowed to enter their hallowed halls.) Boys were, then, educated to work outside the home, in the ever-expanding "public sphere." In this manner, education was of the essence in constructing the "private" and "public" sides of the middle-class society and in ensuring their separation according to gender.

As seen in the dramatic change in the number of girls attending schools in Mount Lebanon, members of this class seem to have heeded calls for educating girls. Numbers tell part of this tale. As late as the first quarter of the nineteenth century, girls' education was considered inappropriate and even immoral by peasants and *shuyukh* alike, for it was thought to promote licentious behavior.[97] The first to break this "tradition" were Protestant missionaries, who set up schools for girls in Beirut and nearby villages. The American Presbyterians led the way as early as 1826 by providing some basic education—mostly in subjects like knitting and sewing—for about thirty girls who were in "occasional attendance" at six schools.[98] Most of these "schools" were located in the residences of the missionaries, and the wives of the missionaries carried out the instruction. It was not until 1835 that a separate room on the mission's ground was set

aside for girls' education. This came to be known as the Female School, and it was headed by an American mistress and a Lebanese assistant who taught on average about twenty-five girls. However, this and other girls' schools established by the American missionaries remained limited to a few well-off Christian girls.[99] Then, in 1846, these missionaries established a boarding school for girls in Beirut and another in Suq al-Gharb in 1858, both of which offered subsidized liberal education in the arts and sciences.[100] The popularity of both schools induced the British missionaries to set up the Girls Training School in Shimlan a few years later.

Although credit must be given to the American missionaries for their early dedication to the concept of female education, the lead in that matter soon passed to the Catholic and Maronite nuns. The Sisters of St. Vincent de Paul, who arrived in Lebanon in 1849, were the first Catholic missionaries to set up schools for girls. By 1869, the sisters—twenty-eight from France and twenty-eight from Lebanon—had built a hospital in Beirut and an orphanage that took in young girls who were deprived of their parents by the civil war in 1860.[101] In addition, the sisters established a school for young girls in 1863 which had forty-three boarding students. The high cost of the school—400 francs or 1,600 piasters per year—made it accessible only to the daughters of well-off families from Beirut and the surrounding mountains. At the same, the sisters established eight schools in Mount Lebanon, concentrated within twenty miles of Beirut except for two that were established in the Kisrawan region. All the schools taught the same curriculum—French, Arabic, arithmetic, history and geography—in addition to providing religious instruction, and education in the eight institutions outside Beirut was free for all 569 students.[102]

Indigenously, two associations of Lebanese nuns in cooperation with the Jesuits were established in 1853 to further female education in Lebanon in the "proper"—that is, Catholic—direction. One of these was the Association of Mariamiyyat, established in Bikfaiya, and the other was the Association of the Heart of Jesus in Zahleh. The first association opened schools in the areas of Kisrawan, Metn, Futuh, Jubayl, and Batrun, while the second opened schools in the Biqa^{c}a valley and Damascus region. Yet, despite these efforts, the number of girls attending schools remained minimal. For example, Constantin Petkovich, the Russian consul general to Beirut, reported in 1885 that all the schools in Mount Lebanon tutored no more than 1,598 girls.[103] Of these, almost a third were girls from the nascent Protestant community in Lebanon, and the remainder came from the other Christian communities. He further

noted—in a disappointed tone—that while a mere 135 girls were Maronite, and another 155 were Greek Catholic, none came from the Greek Orthodox community.[104]

Matters began to change fairly rapidly by the turn of the century. Within the span of two decades (1893–1914), the number of girls' schools in the Mountain mushroomed. Beginning in 1893 various orders of Catholic nuns opened schools in the Mountain. For example, the Nuns of Love established a total of twelve new schools—spread all over the mountain—in the span of fourteen years. Nuns from the St. Joseph order followed suit with four boarding schools for girls, while the Besançon nuns established another four schools in Bikfaiya, Jounieh, Ba^cabdat, and Baskinta.[105] While we do not know the exact number of girls who were enrolled in these schools, we can get a glimpse of the dramatic rise in enrollment from the few examples we have available. For instance, by 1914 nuns from the Association of the Hearts of Jesus and Mary were undertaking the education of 6,000 girls in over thirty schools.[106] In 1894 Jesuits schools were educating a total of 2,130 girls in twenty schools spread over the Mountain. Similarly, by the end of the nineteenth century, the British Syrian mission alone was educating 4,000 pupils—at all levels—in Mount Lebanon, and of these a third were girls.[107] Beyond these specific numbers, we know that other Protestant missionary schools were educating another thousand or so girls around the Mountain, and the remainder of the Catholic schools enrolled at least another two or three thousand girls in their various institutions. In total, then, we can safely estimate that at least reach ten thousand girls were attending schools in the Mountain, as compared to the sixty thousand students who were boys.

The magnitude of this change can be brought into greater relief when we compare these numbers with numbers from surrounding regions within the Ottoman Empire. Geographically, the closest to Mount Lebanon of these regions was the *caza* of Sidon. By the last decade of the nineteenth century that *caza* had a total of five secondary schools, mostly located in the city of Sidon, with a total of 470 students; 200 of them went to two Protestant schools, and just a handful were girls.[108] Even less educationally developed was the region of Sūr, slightly further south than Sidon. In that whole region there were no secondary schools, and for a population of about thirteen thousand there were only seven elementary schools catering mainly to boys.[109] In the Jabal ᶜAmil district where one hundred thousand people—mostly Shiᶜites—lived, formal schooling was almost nonexistent as late as the middle of the twentieth century.[110] Casting our glances even further across the Ottoman empire, we find similar

contrasts. Consider, if you will, that in the province of Aleppo only 4,150 girls out of a population that totaled 921,345 went to school. Further to the northeast, in the province of Ankara—which included over one million people—even fewer girls (3,650) were sent to school. In fact, of the thirty-six provinces listed in the official Ottoman statistical books, none had more girls per capita attending school. To put it another way, while girls attending schools in Mount Lebanon amounted to 2.35 percent of the *total* population, the closest any other Ottoman province came to this figure was that of Sivas, where girls attending school equaled 1 percent of the population at large; most other provinces did not come close to even half a percent. [111] Another perspective is provided by the percentage of girls making up the total school population. While in Mount Lebanon it was almost 17 percent, it rarely broke the 6 percent mark in the remaining Ottoman regions.[112]

However, the weight of the changes in education in the Mountain transcends the issue of numbers. Out of the geographical distribution of these schools over the landscape of the Mountain, we can tease another fact pertinent to the story we are telling. What quickly emerges when the locales of the new schools are plotted is the fact that most were being built further away from the main cities and closer to the villages. This was hardly a matter of happenstance. Rather, we find that in many cases these schools were established in response to the demands of the local population. Take, for example, the village of Bishmizeen—a village of many emigrants. Around 1892 the people of Bishmizeen decided that it was important for their children to obtain an education. Thus, a delegation of village elders approached the Greek Orthodox bishop in Tripoli with a request to establish a school in Bishmizeen. The bishop vacillated and recommended that the villagers send "their children to the Russian mission school in the neighboring village of Amyoun."[113] This solution was not acceptable to the delegates from Bishmizeen, who deemed their village important enough to warrant its own school. The bishop then responded by saying that the people of Bishmizeen were enough trouble as it was and with an education they would become unbearable. Such a tactless argument only roused the delegates to proclaim that if the Greek Orthodox Church could not supply its parishioners with an education, then they would have to resort to the "American Missionaries."[114] The bishop upped the ante by obliquely hinting that such a move might threaten their children's religious well-being—that is, they might be excommunicated. Not to be deterred, one of the delegates replied, "Your Holiness, we don't mean that our children should change their faith; we

want them to be educated as your Holiness was at a missions school. Your Holiness did not change your faith, and our children need not change theirs."[115] The delegates then went back to the missionaries and asked them to open a school, which they did.

Baᶜabdat, Bayt Shabab, Bikfaiya, Baskinta, Zahleh, and Jubayl were all towns like Bishmizeen where schools were built to accommodate the growing demand for education. What is also interesting in all of these—and other—cases is that a third to a half of the townspeople were returned emigrants. Without assuming that those who did not emigrate had no desire to educate their children, we can still argue that returned emigrants pushed this trend more than others did. We can make that statement because returned emigrants—more commonly than other Lebanese—were able to afford the relatively high cost of schooling in the predominantly private institutions of the Mountain. At the St. Joseph school in Bikfaiya, for example, the cost of education in the early 1900s averaged around 220 French francs for boarders and 80 francs for nonboarders.[116] Costs aside, their experience abroad made it more likely that emigrants would accept educating their children as a "normal" part of raising them. While they were in the *mahjar,* many of these emigrants had grown accustomed to sending their children to public schools, if for no other reason than the fact that the law required it. Beyond the arm-twisting laws, emigrants had encountered the debates that raged across the pages of Arab-American newspapers about women's education and status within society. They had carried those discussions into their coffeehouses and living rooms and had gone back and forth between the pros and cons of educating girls. These various factors accounted for the large percentage (76.7 percent) of emigrant children who were attending schools (public and otherwise) in New York, for example. Similar high rates existed as well among the emigrant community in Argentina and Brazil.[117] Therefore, in addition to the fact that they had the financial wherewithal, exposure to education made returned emigrants more prone to send their girls to school than were those who had stayed behind.

But there was a far more utilitarian and, perhaps, compelling reason for families to provide their daughters with an education: "marriageability." Preparing a young woman through education to be a "goddess" of the house was considered more and more of a necessity to enhance her chances of betrothal to a man of good social standing. Here we find the remainder of the cycle which tied class with gender. Young women needed to be educated in order to be better wives and to be able to marry well; doing so would guarantee them—and, by extension, their families—

a place within the middle class. As the Maronite Monsignor Emmanuel Pharès argued in 1908, young women should be taught (according to the "American" model) how to run the household economy and contribute to it by better management of their time in order to attract returning emigrant men.[118] A more popular remark, common in the early 1900s, affirmed that "she is a school girl now; we cannot hope to have her marry our [poor] son!"[119] Underlying these and many other similar statements is the keen awareness that the institution of marriage, itself, was in the process of changing. Within the ranks of this emerging rural middle class, marriage was being transformed—however slowly and incompletely—from a mechanism for solidifying the patrilineal bonds of a clan into one that reinforced relations within the same social class. To fully comprehend this transformation we need to cast a glance at marriage traditions that predated the emigration movement.

Marriage

As far back as the seventeenth century, the process of marriage among Maronite peasants followed a common path, with few occasional and minor variations. Generally, at the age of sixteen or seventeen a young boy was considered ready for marriage, and "the parents would search for a companion worthy of their son and of the family."[120] Marriage had to be contracted between *majaweez,* or "marriageables."[121] These were families whose heritage and lineage were considered by other families honorable enough to allow for intermarriage. More likely than not the "companion" would be a close paternal cousin from within the extended clan.[122] This tradition cut across the social classes and religious boundaries to apply to everyone who resided in the Mountain. For instance, William Polk, in his study *The Opening of South Lebanon: 1788–1840,* found that of 189 marriages in the Druze family ᶜAbd as-Samad of ᶜAmmatur, 171 were contracted between paternal cousins. Similarly, the Abu Shaqra clan favored patrilineal cousin marriage in 149 of 184 marriages.[123] Among the Maronite families in the village of Bsus before 1873, only 6 percent of all marriages were contracted with members of different clans.[124]

The pressure to marry cousins was at times so extreme as to pit son against parents. For instance, in 1870 in the town of Dayr al-Qamar a young man from the Basilius clan wanted to marry a young woman from the Kik

clan. His parents, however, insisted that he marry one of his cousins, and when he persisted in his refusal, they locked him up in "one of those vaults specially assigned to those who commit an offense or go against the opinion of his parents in family matters." Finally, the young man succeeded in escaping and eloping with his lover to Turkey.[125] If this tradition of eloping—well established as it was in the Mountain—provided a safety valve for the social system, it was also the exception to the rule: most young people submitted to their parents' opinion in marriage matters.

If not every young man married his cousin, the rest tended to marry from within the same village. Endogamous marriage was much preferred to exogamous marriage as practice and tradition verbalized in proverbs show. For example: "He who marries from a distant area is like that who drinks from a jar [i.e., he does not know what is in the water], and he who marries from his village is like that who drinks from a glass [i.e., he knows whether the water is clean or dirty.]"[126] Another was more explicit: "The daughter of your village will carry through good and bad."[127] Available statistics show these proverbs to be descriptive of reality. In the town of Bsus, in the Shūf region, the number of endogamous marriages between 1873 and 1882 amounted to about 87 percent of the total nuptials.[128] In the village of ᶜAmmatur—also in the Shūf region—only 16 out of 189 marriages in the ᶜAbd as-Samad clan were contracted with families from other villages. Similarly, in 187 marriages in the Abu Shaqra clan, only twenty-four brides were from a village outside ᶜAmmatur. Even in the few cases where the bride and the groom were from separate villages, the distance that separated them was rarely more than ten miles.[129] Finally, in the Greek Orthodox village of Munsif, no exogamous marriages were recorded before 1890.[130]

The overwhelming predominance of cousin marriage—common to most Mediterranean societies—arose from the economic conditions in Mount Lebanon. As Jane Schneider argues for the case of southern Italy and Greece, fragmentation of the land in an area where resources are limited meant a reduction in the power of the family. It also multiplied the boundaries which a family had to defend and increased the potential for conflict over encroachments by one person on another's patrimony.[131] Cousin marriage thus kept the land in the same clan and established social ties between its members in a way that defused most disagreements over land. And when conflicts arose, they were kept within the boundaries of the clan, whose elders would act as judges in such matters to limit any divisive interference from the outside. A more positive reason for the predominance of lineage endogamy among Lebanese peasantry derives from the nature of the land itself. As Robert Creswell argues, land could

only become capital for the peasants if it was terraced for farming. Therefore, the lineage that had with the most sons and that practiced lineage endogamy could, "by putting more and more land into cultivation, increase its capital at each succeeding generation."[132]

However, the financial prowess of the new rural middle class—which consisted largely of returned emigrants—made these issues less important. Specifically, by the end of the nineteenth century, returned emigrants were relying on their financial capital (and not their human capital) to increase their landholdings. *Al-Mashriq* magazine lamented this fact while noting that emigrants, who had spent many years toiling in some part of the Americas, were investing in land that returned no more than 1.5 percent rather than in projects with higher returns.[133] Examples of investment in land abound. A woman and her husband from Hadeth el-Jobbeh returned from Mexico to the village and bought about 200 *dirhem*s of land when the three main notables of that village collectively owned 248 *dirhem*s.[134] In 1898 Assaf Khater returned to his native village of Lehfed after a seven-year stay in Uruguay and invested a good part of his savings in large plots of land.[135] In total, of the estimated $8 million that came back from the *mahjar*, close to half was invested in land. In short, many returned emigrants had the money to buy land and thus did not need to depend on a large family to carve it out of the mountain. This made cousin marriage less pertinent to them as gentlemen farmers. What had become more critical was the articulation and preservation of an elevated social status. Thus, many rural, middle-class families moved away from relying primarily on lineage in assessing the "marriageability" of a potential groom or bride and began to place more emphasis on wealth (the crass definition of social class). But, here again, it would be far too simple to assume that only money mattered. Equally, the changed expectations of emigrant men helped transform the meaning of marriage. In the *mahjar*, most of them were exposed, to one extent or another, to a more cosmopolitan life where many women were educated and more liberated in their social milieu. In the cities of Boston and Buenos Aires, they saw—from the doorways—the ideal middle-class home: the woman beautifying that haven while waiting for her husband to return from his daily encounter with a tumultuous world. In the Arab-American press they read (or listened to someone reading) essays about the virtues of an educated bride and companion and about the vices of arranged cousin-marriages. They themselves, as a result of their peddling activities, had learned enough of a foreign language and arithmetic to at least assume greater sophistication and knowledge. Thus, their experiences during years of peddling in cities, their exposure to a more urbane life-style,

and the education they acquired combined to change their social attitudes and expectations. One commentator back in Lebanon summarized this metamorphosis by saying of these emigrant men that they had a difficult choice because "the young woman of their class [is] lamentably lacking intellectually."[136] Thus, they wanted a more educated woman of a better class to equal their individual achievements, be they real or imagined.

By the 1910s, this change in attitudes and the emergence of a middle class launched a trend—reflected in marriage records—toward exogamous marriages in Mount Lebanon. Returning to the village of Bsus, we find that while only 13 percent of marriages were exogamous between 1873 and 1882, but that percentage leapt to 34 percent in the years between 1893 and 1902.[137] In Munsif, the percentage of exogamous marriages went from zero—between 1860 and 1889—to 12.5 percent by 1914 and to 33 percent by 1930.[138] Even in the remote village of Hadeth el-Jobbeh, exogamous marriage had taken hold by the beginning of World War I, at which time 11 percent of all marriages were exogamous.[139] When compared with marital trends among Muslims (who rarely emigrated), this shift becomes even more pronounced. In the Muslim village of Haouch el-Harimi, 86 percent of the 283 contracted marriages in 1963 were endogamous, and the 40 who did marry someone from outside the village chose their spouses from close by.[140] And as late as 1980, 50 percent of Muslim marriages in Lebanon were contracted among cousins, whereas among Christians this figure was only 22 percent.[141]

If these numbers tell us anything, it is that marriage was in a state of flux by the first decade of the twentieth century. "Traditional" cousin-marriages, which were arranged by families, persisted alongside a "modern" type of marriage where lineage was but one consideration, at best. Wealth, education, and even premarital love were added, in various portions, to the formula of marriage. Rather than creating a "modern" and singular tradition of betrothal, these factors simply made for greater uncertainty as to the meaning and purpose of this institution within the middle-class society under construction. Was marriage solely the means to bring forth children and populate the society, or was it a culmination of the love between two people? Or both? If cousins should not necessarily be wedded, then how were people to select their spouses? Was money more important than schooling, or was it the other way around? How was beauty to be measured? Should love conquer religious and social boundaries?

Answers were not easy to come by, but many tried to arrive at some definitions. One of the most comprehensive of these attempts was a serial-

ized essay by Elias Tweyni entitled "The Philosophy of Marriage." In trying to introduce his readers to a new meaning of marriage, Tweyni began by describing the history of marriage among various peoples (Persians, Romans, Greeks, Gaels). His purpose for such a circuitous journey to "modern" marriage was to affirm that throughout many times and places "a man cannot be a man and neither the woman a woman . . . except in marriage." Yet, he also argued that marriage is not static but changes with times and place. Therefore, for Lebanese society on the cusp of the twentieth century, he provided a "model" notion of marriage. He emphasized that marriage is a union of two individuals; one that should be based on "compatibility in morals, characteristics and interests." A peasant woman and a middle-class man, or the reverse, would be hard-pressed to share any of these elements. Without excluding the family from playing a role in arranging this confluence of two individuals, Tweyni reminded his readers that in the end the man and the woman decide such crucial matters. Beyond a shared culture, Tweyni counseled, "no rational person can deny that a poor educated woman is better [as a wife] than a rich ignorant one."[142] It was not that he considered money unimportant but that an ignorant woman would squander her "husband's wealth" while an educated one would certainly add to the financial well-being of the family by being frugal and not as inclined toward "senseless" expenditures on "make-up and clothes." Finally, Tweyni contended that for marriage to work properly "the man must not abuse his authority over her, and the woman must not demean his rights."[143] In other words, it must be based on "true love," whereby the man treats his wife as his equal "not only because she is a woman but because she is his wife," and the woman supports her husband and listens to his counsel. Tweyni concluded his treatise by stating, "If the husband and wife understand all of this then they will live happily ever after."[144] Tweyni was expounding the same ideology as various reformers in Egypt, Iran, and Turkey. In place of supposed awe of wife for husband, he proposed a friendship. In other words, he was intent on redirecting the attention of the woman and the man from their homosocial spheres toward a heterosexual sociability that unites them in a familial unit isolated from kin and directed toward the "nation."

Conclusion

Tweyni and others were writing against the backdrop of what they understood of peasant "traditions" of marriage and gender re-

lations. Equality, love, and mutual individual interests were posited in sharp contrast to inequality, arranged betrothal, and the interests of the clan. This opposition—along with the juxtaposition of the *harat* with peasant homes and of education with "ignorance"—was necessary and integral to the process of defining the boundaries of the middle class. Central to this process was gender and its "modern" articulation into two separate "but equal" spheres. Ideally, one was the private and serene domain of the "home," where women were supposed to reign as "goddesses" who created an earthly haven for the family and trained the children of the nation. The other was the harsh "public" world of commerce, government, and trade, where men toiled in endless competition to gather money and support their families.

This cultural process gained a particularly vigorous social momentum in Lebanon because its ideological contents overlapped with the practical desires of a large group of Lebanese who had returned from the *mahjar* with new money and manners. Over the span of three decades (1890–1920) these emigrants employed their money to build new houses, to buy land, and to educate their children. Their actions were meant both to distinguish them from the peasants surrounding them in the villages of their birth and to allow them to live in greater comfort. To give meaning to their departures, returned emigrants sought to associate themselves with the "modern" as they had experienced it in the *mahjar* and as they read about it in the newspapers of Beirut. From both sources, they articulated their own notions of the "modern," and they applied them to their own lives. In this regard, new ideas about gender, family, love, and marriage became metaphors for "modernity." *Franji* clothes on the backs of rural middle-class women were a distinctive sign of the "modern"; education of girls was a boundary that separated the lot of peasants from a refined middle-class life; and the circumscribing of women's homosociality was deemed to be "progress." In other words, many emigrants displayed their "modernity" by embracing and helping to define a new meaning of "womanhood." To inculcate this "natural" state of being into their daughters, they sent them to schools which taught them the art of managing a household and which prepared them to be better wives and mothers. They would also be prepared to marry into a better social status and thus continue the cycle of producing and reproducing a middle class. However, not all were happy with this new state of being.

6

A Woman's Boundaries

A woman is not lower in rank [than a man]. This is particularly obvious after science and enlightenment has uncovered the true and natural position of a woman, her capacities and mental prowess and her ability to [do] all that a man practices.

—Salma Kalila, "al-Rajul wal-maraʾ"

Salma Kalila made this defense of women's "natural" rights in one of several essays she wrote in 1895 for the newspaper *Lubnan*. In the same essay she added, "Since the door to acquiring knowledge has been opened for females we have seen them [become] doctors, writers, lawyers, composers, and queens who hold in their hands the reins to the politics of the majority of this world. Thus, we can no longer say that a moral woman elevated by knowledge has to stand humiliated and demeaned before an ignorant and lazy man simply because he is supposedly more noble [in gender.]"[1] In writing this fiery discourse, Kalila was responding in particular to Rashid Saʿid Nakhleh, who had argued—in an earlier essay entitled "Keeping the Woman within Her Limits"—that women who seek equality with men are overstepping natural boundaries set by God.[2] This debate was remarkable for its intensity and duration and for the number of writers who engaged in it. But it also begs our attention because Kalila and her cohorts were questioning the very premise of separate spheres for men and women and their limits, even as those were being elaborated in newspapers and in daily life.

This critique of the "private" and "public" segmentation of middle-class life was but one of the many tensions in its making in Lebanon. While most of these stressful forces did not produce such direct and harsh analysis, all pushed against the rising envelopes which were meant to separate "home" from the world outside it. Charity work, social visits, presence at public ceremonies and in public rituals were the means through which many more women—consciously and unwittingly—kept overstepping and moving the drawn lines of "family" life and perforating the shell of domesticity. As much as these critiques and challenges derived from "new" understandings of the position of women in society, the history of women's work in village fields, silk factories, and the *mahjar* served equally to undermine the construction of an enclosed, "private," feminine domain and thus complicated the project of "modernity." In other words, explicitly and implicitly feminist arguments against the new patriarchal order carried with a them the subtext of a tradition of women's labor and life outside the home. Memories of such lives were strong testimony against the ideal of a "weaker sex" and a fragile femininity that was the premise for assigning women to the realm of the household. Finally, generational conflicts between parents and children kept the social matrix of the middle class in flux by illuminating its contradictions. Many of these generational conflicts derived from the discrepancy between images of romantic love of equals and the realities of marriages arranged between unequals. In other words, these centrifugal forces emanated from the contradiction inherent in a "modern" that supposedly celebrated and uplifted the individual but that in reality sought to subsume it into a new and more "scientifically" rigorous set of social constraints and ideological binds. Our story, then, would not be complete without an excursion into these troubled waters, which were as much a part of middle-class life as the new *harat*, different clothes, and the "goddess" of the house.

Feminist Discourse

By far, the most vociferous and articulate attack on emerging middle-class "traditions" came from women writers who initially (in the 1890s) published their work in the general press but who a decade later came to publish in women's journals and magazines. At the most basic level, these women challenged the boundaries between the "public" and

"private" spheres by publishing their thoughts. Even before considering the content of their articles on the subject of women and their roles in society, we are confronted with a profound change in the nature of public discourse. Simply put, by the 1920s women's voices in Lebanon—as in Cairo, Istanbul, and Teheran[3]—were louder and more present than ever before. Thus, women's names and—in some cases—pictures which appeared on the pages of newspapers and magazines were constant reminders of the porous nature of the "public/private" divide.[4] In signing their names for all to read, women were "intruding" into a previously male-dominated medium of public expression and community. To fully grasp the magnitude of this development, we are obliged to see it through the lens of the time in which these women thought and wrote. Before the 1890s, women's names did not appear on books or articles. We have no record of women making any public speeches or demanding a greater role for women within society. Therefore, the contrast between the total absence of women's names from public documents before the 1890s and their relative profusion after that time is quite striking.

Ironically, this was as much the case for women who wrote in support of keeping women at home as for those who were trying to pull down the barriers of that "private" sphere. Read, for instance, the following introduction to a book by Anisa al-Shartouni entitled *The Clarification of Discourse on Man and Woman:*

> For many days now many intellectuals have written in the Beirut newspapers on this subject [men and women] which this limited one [the author] could not engage in. Discussions of it [this subject] have become numerous at social gatherings at houses, and there appeared many proponents of the woman who have demanded equating her with the man thinking that in her status, familiar from the beginning of time, she has been beneath the man. In fact, there occurred in front of me a discussion between two educated ladies who went so far as to conclude that the woman should have the same rights in government posts as that of a man. Since that day I have been thinking about this matter . . . and there occurred to me that which I am writing now."[5]

Her conclusion about this subject came in a section of the book called "The Grandeur of the Work for Which Woman Was Created." She wrote, with finality, "according to her constitution [a woman] must stay in her house to take care of its affairs."[6] Yet, there she was stepping out of her house through her travels and the pen, spending time not arranging the *salon* but in fact thinking and writing. Such pronounced irony did not escape the attention of readers—men or women. Zaynab Fawaz sarcasti-

cally noted this discrepancy in one of her essays. She wrote, "It is really puzzling how the honorable writer Miss Anisa al-Shartouni expects other women to stay home and tend to its chores when she, herself, is obviously not practicing that 'noble' role."[7]

This dialogue between Fawaz and Shartouni frames the extent of the political spectrum across which women's writings were spread. While some wrote in rhapsodic tones about the "house," others rejected it as a prison for women that would leave them powerless and that would keep society and the "nation" from progressing. In a single issue of a magazine, the reader could find an energetic demand for opening the world of formal politics to women and another article on house management and table etiquette. While these messages would appear to negate each other in substance and goal, their dialogue was in fact productive. As Marilyn Booth noted for Egypt, this conflict is significant because it was "an open-ended series of dialectics that might have produced different resolutions for different groups of people."[8] In other words, the series of dialectics negated "woman" as an essentialized subject. Women who wrote did so not in any uniform fashion but rather in a multitude of ways, and they expressed divergent opinions, which in themselves were testimony against the projected uniformity of "woman." While, in the previous chapter, I discussed how narratives of domesticity were part of the construction of the "goddess" of the house, here I would like to focus on opposing texts that were read as sources for the dismantlement of that edifice.

Among the many different types of texts that appeared in the women's press, the most common were biographies of "famous women." This conduct literature presented readers with the lives of "important" women like George Eliot, Madame de Staël, Lady Hester Stanhope, and Eleanor Roosevelt. Their representations were in reality all about a modernity where women are not peripheral but central, where they do not reside in a domesticated sphere but in a public arena, and where they are not synonymous with society but are distinguishable individuals. These texts were set against the predominantly masculine narrative of "modernity" and were therefore critical in the making of the "modern."[9] Biographies "presented models of womanhood through concrete, historically attested example" that contested the singularity of an idealized middle-class "woman" by illustrating a wide range of possible roles for women that did not go "too far" beyond the constructed boundaries.[10]

The rendition of Madame de Staël's life is illustrative of this process. While various women's magazines ran short biographies of de Staël at various times, *al-Hasna*ʾ dedicated eight pages to her life in 1909. The

moral of the story, which *al-Hasna*ʾ expected its readers to take away from the article, was set in the opening lines. "Great is the lady with whom is concerned a great genius so that he fears her at the height of his power . . . and then asks for her help to support whatever he had recovered from his lost glory. And noble is she who openly declares the Truth and serves Humanity as she believes without fear of oppression."[11] Thus was established from the outset the two archetypes for "man" and "woman": the man a power-hungry, unprincipled individual, and the woman an altruistic and brave person who struggles selflessly for the sake of humanity. This characterization resonates with similar polarizations along the axes of gender in the biographies of other "famous" women. Booth notes this polarization in her article about the representation of Jeanne d'Arc around the turn of the century in Egyptian magazines, which were incidentally quite accessible to the emerging middle classes in Lebanon. She writes, "The attributes that mark Jeanne from one biography to another echo those that characterize other 'Famous Women': determination, intelligence, boldness, integrity, steadfastness. Her image contrasts repeatedly with that of Charles VII as vacillating and fearful."[12]

The power of the representation of de Staël in *al-Hasna*ʾ was amplified throughout the remainder of the essay with a more detailed enumeration of the characteristics that made her outstanding as a human being. Her speech was "one of force and conviction"; she was an "immensely" talented speaker "widely knowledgeable in all subjects"; she was religious while "remaining enlightened"; and, despite the loftiness of her social position, she was "humble and did not care for formalities," nor did she put on airs or care about fashion but dressed in simple but elegant clothes.[13] Similarly, *al-Hasna*ʾ ran a biography of Mrs. Roosevelt which portrayed her as an "intelligently quiet" woman who was instrumental in the making of U.S. politics, yet who was humble and selfless.[14] Such characteristics were not limited to "Western" women, as readers were edified with the tales of Ottoman and Egyptian women who were meant to be role models for what a "woman" should aspire to be. In one issue in 1909, *al-Hasna*ʾ dedicated five pages to a description of the "enlightened Ottoman woman" and her accomplishments. Speaking, for instance, of Princess Nazli Hanem (the daughter of Mustafa Pasha, the founder of the Young Turkey Party), the author wrote that she was "educated, enlightened, civilized with nationalist and human feelings and a noble soul that aspired to independence and liberty."[15] In linking Nazli Hanem, and various other princesses, to Ottoman constitutional reforms, the article made it explicitly clear that reforms and "moderniza-

tion" would not have been possible without the interventions of these notable women.

The composite picture that emerges from these various biographies offers a rather different gender role for women readers. Instead of being daughters, mothers, or wives, they are first and foremost individuals who are distinguished by their active participation in nationalist struggles to better the world. Their education is not simply a tool for teaching children but, more critically, is an instrument of social and political change. Tempering class distinctions—as all these women were of the elites—was the emphasis on a humble demeanor when it came to the material display of wealth, even though these women projected a powerful intellectual presence in conversations and debates. Yet, even in these narratives of "woman" that challenged the domesticating discourse of "modernity," varying limits were set for the extent to which women could depart from the boundaries of "private" lives. All these "famous women" share a gentleness and purity that define femininity, and their excursions outside the boundaries of the "private" are tightly linked to a societal reason larger than themselves, be it liberty or nationalism. In all these contexts, "woman" remains "a kind of continuum of sociality against which the political was set." She remains tightly linked to society through a constructed and complex "femininity," as opposed to "man," who faces society.[16]

Adding to the complexity of texts that sought to define the "modern woman" and to which middle-class women were exposed were many essays that strenuously challenged the notion of "femininity" as proposed by most men and as adopted by many women. Writing in *al-Sa^cih,* Sarah Abi al-ᶜAlaᵓ noted caustically that "a woman does not adorn herself with jewelry except that the man want[s] her to, and she does not put on creams and powders except that he is searching (desperately) for the white [skinned] and red [lipped] young woman, and she does not wear a corset except for the fact that he requires the narrow waist, and she does not wear low-cut dresses but for the fact that he desires to take pleasure in staring at her chest. . . . They call us ladies when we are anything but that for them, in reality we are nothing but commodities for them and they are the merchants and customers."[17] In one paragraph she challenged the construction of "woman" at several levels simultaneously. She dismissed the assumption by "men" that "women" are "frivolous," thus—so the argument went—rendering them incapable of sustaining rational thought or dealing with social, political, or economic power. Rather, she throws the blame squarely at the feet of "men"—a category as essentialized as

"women"—noting in the process the discrepancy of power through the metaphor of market exchange. She strips the cloth of propriety off the crass materialism of middle-class life and its voyeuristic sexuality, and she exposes the gaping inequality that it was producing between the "woman" and the "man." Reading this narrative, one is inexorably drawn to the conclusion that Abi al-ᶜAlaᵓ's solution to this sorry state of affairs would be to reestablish the humanity of the category "woman" by giving her power over her body and her life.

Other commentators directed their criticism against the women who abided by the notions of femininity which Abi al-ᶜAlaᵓ criticized. One female author sarcastically described the "apparition" of a young middle-class woman in these words: "[She had] a skin covered with powders and a waist that [was] squeezed by a corset until it practically equaled her neck in thinness. And she was wearing an expensive silk dress . . . and on her head a white hat from which dangled ostrich feathers . . . and on her hands two gloves of smooth leather that she was busy putting them. . . . No matter what I said to her she constantly went back to talking about servants and types of foods and other such trivial matters."[18] These words were clearly a critique of the gendered models of the modern but one which looked at women as actors in the making of their own powerlessness. No man was present to demand or justify the image of frivolity that was painted by these words. Yet, like Abi al-ᶜAlaᵓs, this author presented frivolity as a negative characteristic, especially when juxtaposed with the images being produced in the women's press of the "woman" as the industrious manager of the houses of the nation. Servants, preparation of food, and fashion—in other words the stuff of middle-class household life according to other writers—were dismissed as irrelevant to the construction of an idealized middle-class "woman."

Fatat Lubnan, a women's magazine, pictorially juxtaposed this "decadent" image of femininity with a far more utilitarian and truly "modern" one. On the cover of every issue of the magazine a young woman sat alone between two trees (and not in some *salon*) sporting a sturdy pair of boots and a comfortable jacket and skirt (showing enough of her calves to flaunt false modesty without going overboard into the realm of risqué clothes) and wearing her hair in a loose pony tail that eschewed any frivolity. Between her hands she held a book, in which she was apparently engrossed. Notable was the total absence of men in this picture. The image presented was of an independent woman who was not seeking to please men by her appearance and did not care for their presence, at least not while she was so obviously enthralled in learning and gaining knowledge. Furthermore,

this "woman" was not bound to a house, and her movements were not limited, as she clearly had to travel alone into her place in nature away from village, town, and, particularly, city. Several articles appeared in this magazine about the same subject. In one such instance, an article criticized the upbringing of girls, "which is harmful to them from various aspects for reasons of which the most important we mention. . . . Second: They lean towards making themselves up and following fashions even the harmful and immodest. . . . Sixth: for marriage they depend on adornment and romance."[19] As much as some women's magazines were embroiled in the making of the "goddess" of the house, *Fatat Lubnan* as well as the previous authors and magazines were busy dispelling any such notions.

In opposing the discursive gendered models of middle-class life, some women writers did not limit themselves to the subject of clothes and appearances in their criticisms. Rather they challenged the whole premise on which women's role in society was predicated. Note, for instance, the following retort by Salma Kalila:

> I do not forgive the honorable debater [Rashid Saᶜid Nakhleh] the opinion which he gave with regard to limiting women's education only to the simplest of sciences after Knowledge has allowed access to its riches to every human brain so that it would drink of it to benefit itself and others and to be an important worker in the field of human civilization. This is especially true since science has proven, and the philosophers and educated have decided, the necessity of enlightening the woman.[20]

Other authors were equally vociferous in decrying the "imprisonment" of women within the realm of the house. Zaynab Fawaz was one of those. In 1893, she wrote a fiery dismissal of the resolution by the 1893 International Women's Conference that called for limiting a woman's education since her "sphere of activity is bound within the boundaries of the family." Fawaz attacked the women who authored this declaration for their "cowardice" and insisted on unfettering women's rights in all spheres of human activity and, in particular, science.[21] She wrote, "What is the problem with women's participation in men's work and [in] occupying positions within political spheres if [they are] qualified to do so . . . ? Otherwise, what is the use of learning all these sciences?"[22] Knowledge, or "true and sincere science" (as Fawaz put it), was thusly marshaled by Fawaz and Kalila to counter the claim of other writers that "nature" or God made women to be in the house. Striking a defiant secular tone, both authors attempted to bring "woman" into the mainstream of humanity and to make her a constituent element of its highest achievement: civilization. To them this was

neither a "Western" nor an "Eastern" trait or structure but rather a universal state of being to which they proposed that all people aspired. What is intriguing about these two essays—and a few others like them—is that their authors did not feel the need to justify the desirability of such a goal but rather assumed that anyone seeking to be "modern" would naturally and scientifically desire to be civilized.

Writing in less lofty terms, Dawud Naqash—one of the few men who publicly supported greater rights for women—agreed with the need for women to go beyond the boundaries of the house. In 1895, he penned an article entitled "Women and Idleness" in which he argued that society does not need women to spend their time cooking and cleaning; rather it needs them working in the "public" sphere. The woman, as experience has shown lately, is capable of doing most of the tasks in which men are engaged. . . . As for the supposition by some that the entry of women into the sphere of business, equally with men, will undermine the morals, well it is not based on anything but the premise of submission to old traditions and habits. Whoever contemplates the natural and educated laws will judge a woman the same as he judges a man. . . . Instead of wasting his wife's time in cooking and cleaning [a European middle-class man] takes his wife to help him in his affairs that [had he wished to employ someone else to help him with it] would cost him far more than he pays for a cook and a servant. In this manner he would have given his wife a job far more important and profitable than throwing her in the corner of a kitchen.[23]

Echoing these sentiments, Salima Abi Rashid wrote in the inaugural editorial of her magazine, *Fatat Lubnan,* "Experience and tangible proofs, which have appeared so far, have show[n] that a woman is capable of following a man's suit in the majority of life's tasks. And that she is instinctively ready to participate in work."[24] A decade later, Julia Taᶜmi Dimashqiya was making a similar argument. She wrote—in *The New Woman* magazine—that a young woman "must enter society through a wide door, that is the door of work. . . . It is the duty of the brother to accompany his sister to the factories and stores so that she will not miss the experience of managing businesses."[25] In that same period, Abbas Mahmoud al-ᶜAqqad questioned the whole premise of women's education in an issue of *Minerva* (a feminist magazine). He wrote, under the title "Education of the Woman," "The purpose behind educating a girl should not be limited to teaching how to be a wife unless we teach the boy in the schools how to be a husband. It is our duty . . . to teach her to be a young woman capable of handling half the burdens of the social structure."[26] By the early 1920s these and other demands for full equality

between men and women had come to share the pages of women's magazines and feminist journals. These sentiments were summarized by an author who wrote, "We see glimpses of this *nahda* [the nation rising to destroy corrupt and outdated of traditions,] whose promises appear in the recent Women's Movement."[27]

In these latter commentaries we can locate an intimate connection between gender and class that was contrary to the ideal of a housebound "womanhood." In other words, while the construction of the "goddess" of the house was an intersection of class, sexuality, and nation, the images that stood in opposition to it were equally so. Those who sought to bring women out of the house and into the "public" sphere contended that staying home was a waste of women's education and capabilities. Tasks such as cleaning and cooking were—according to these advocates—best left to the lower classes of servants. Thus, the potential for increasing the earnings and concomitant social status of the middle-class family was better attained through the employment of women in productive affairs. Such a utilitarian argument spoke directly to the emergence of a capitalist economy where status was being measured not solely by clan but more and more by the amount of money accumulated. The achievement of greater rights by middle-class women was then predicated on their status as members of a social group that was above menial work.[28] In other words, even as these reformers struggled to extricate middle-class women from their prison of expectations, they did so in a manner that depended on the "imprisonment" of others into equally artificial categories. We thus have to conclude that their rejection of the cult of domesticity was not a refusal to accept constructed identities that bind but simply a desire to replace one set of identities with a more favorable one. As Denise Riley put it, "It is a cruel irony, which returns at several watersheds in the history of feminism, that the need to insist on the moral rehabilitation of 'women' should have the effect of emphasizing their distinctiveness, despite the fact that it may aim at preparing the way into the category of humanity."[29]

These diverse approaches to women's rights and the promises which they contained were stoked in part by the writings of Lebanese women from across the seas who had encountered the same paradoxical aspects of the language of feminist reform. As we saw in Chapter 4, some emigrant women who resided in the *mahjar* began to explore their social, economic, and cultural roles from their new vantage points. This exploration was transmitted to Mount Lebanon through articles, speeches, private discussions, and lectures. One of the earliest examples of this process was

embodied by Hanna Kasbani Kourani. Born in the village of Kfershima in 1870 and educated at various American and English missionary schools, Kourani worked as a teacher at the American Girls School in Tripoli in addition to writing articles for various magazines and newspapers. Despite all her work outside the realm of the "house," Kourani was quite conservative in her early years as a writer. For instance, in one of her articles she insisted that "the domestic plan is natural for women and they must not overstep it because that is the moral code which God has decreed and if they overstepped it then they would change the order of the universe and the laws of nature."[30] Yet, just few years later these dire warnings of the consequences of social change in gender roles were replaced by a distinctively admiring tone for the work of women in the "public" arenas. This metamorphosis came about as a result of Kourani's trip to the United States.

Delegated to represent "Syrian" women at the International Women's Meeting, she traveled to Chicago, where the conference was held in 1893. Afterward, she spent three years traveling across the United States, giving speeches and lectures to support herself in the wake of her separation from her husband. On her return to Lebanon—which was prompted by an illness that took her life in 1898—she wrote a speech titled "Modernization and Its Influence on the East."[31] She began this speech with the declaration that woman's "influence on modernization is similar to the accomplishments of men; . . . she has extended her hand to all types of work, and she has not left without knocking on it [the door of opportunity], and she has forced the man to acknowledge her abilities and her accomplishments." After running through a list of women's activities in the West for the benefit of her female audience, she concluded by stating that "our knowledge of the greatness . . . that . . . women in the West have accomplished and are accomplishing should exhort us to follow suit here in the East."[32] This rallying cry for a change in women's roles within society and the nation was certainly a dramatic reversal from Kourani's earlier pronouncements, which spoke of an eternal order "that cannot be changed."[33] Of equal significance is the fact that Kourani had come to see the possibility and worth of equality between men and women, whereas previously she had derided such a notion as utterly unnatural. In speaking her mind about these matters, Kourani was essentially translating the outcome of her individual—and in many ways painful—experience in the United States into a public discourse about the need for more rights for women.

A later example of women's voices from the *mahjar* is to be found in the ubiquitous writings of ᶜAfifa Karam, whom we encountered in

Chapter 4. Born in 1883 in the village of ᶜAmsheet, she was educated at the local elementary school at the hands of a Sister Ursula. Around the turn of the century, she emigrated to the United States with her husband, Hanna Salih Karam, and she resided there until her death in 1925. In the intervening years Karam was a prolific writer whose articles on women appeared regularly in *al-Huda*. She edited and published a journal—*al-Maraᵓ al-Suriya*—between 1911 and 1913, after which she established the journal *al-ᶜAlam al-Jadid*. In most of her endeavors Karam was concerned with the positions of women within "Eastern" societies as well as in the *mahjar*. This concern was played out in a regular column entitled "Hadith al-Mahjar" (Talk of the *Mahjar*), which appeared in the Egyptian women's journal *al-Maraᵓ al-Jadida*. In an early article, she introduced the purpose of her column in the following manner: "Would you permit me—oh, the daughter of my less developed country—to tell you something about your emigrant [woman] compatriot?"[34] In a series of subsequent articles Karam proceeded to describe the life of middle-class women in the United States, their access to education, their scientific and literary contributions, and their fight for political rights. In addition, she wrote extensively and quite thoughtfully about the struggle of Lebanese emigrant women to stretch their lives between "two contradictory cities, one of which is purely Eastern, and the other is absolutely American. And we [emigrant women] are incapable of reaching the degree [of status] we want in either of them."[35]

Although somewhat condescending in tone throughout her "dialogue" with the "sister" left behind, Karam was quite sincere about bridging the gap that had opened between Lebanese women in the *mahjar* and those who stayed in the villages and towns of the Mountain. She makes this goal aptly clear in a later article, where she writes, "Did you imagine from reading my past letters that I lean towards favoring your emigrant sister over you? If that is what has happened then it is clearly a mistake. It is not my intention from this explanation to 'exaggerate and defend' [the status of emigrant women]. . . . Rather, [my intent was] showing a state of which you are ignorant, and introducing you to a sister with whom you have become at opposite ends of the spectrum. That is all I want."[36] In fact, Karam need not have worried overly since her column was one of the most popular features in *al-Maraᵓ al-Jadida*. This was made patently clear when the editor introduced Karam's column, in one issue of the journal, with the following words: "We thank Mrs. ᶜAfifa and beg of her to continue corresponding with us with these worthy benefits that cannot be obtained except by living amongst the most advanced peoples of this earth in literature

and science."[37] Karam did continue to write, weaving a discourse that combined descriptions of the state of women's lives in the *mahjar* with entreaties to Lebanese women to forge forward along their own path to "equality, democracy and freedom." She summarized these aspirations in one of her final articles, which prophetically noted:

> If the result came to be as all of us wish for it, which is for us to have in the old country a renewed and innovated Eastern civilization [that is] not a Western imitation, [but] which will equal Western civilizations in advances and elevation, and not be of them, then the advantage will be yours [the woman in Lebanon] in your country, where are your schools, your language and your customs and your intellectual salons. But if the future hides a grafting unto the civilizations of the West and our becoming a part of it . . . then your emigrant sister will be without doubt ahead of you for what she has available to her of means, power and capabilities.[38]

Women in Lebanon read such words critically, accepting those that were relevant to their immediate lives and discarding others that were divorced from their realities. As with news received about women's achievements in Europe, Egypt, Istanbul, or the United States, these Lebanese women used the links to images of other possibilities as fodder in their own struggle against the status quo, against assertions of some eternal tradition or ordained plan that assigned women to the house.[39] Fawaz spoke of this possibility for change when she wrote, "Imagine, oh rational one, how a human being [weak in stature] . . . approaches difficulties and resolves them by the power of his intelligence . . . and changes the world [in the process]."[40] She concluded that this "sight" should dispel any "outdated" notions which set a permanent place for women in society.

It should be evident by now that from 1890 through the second decade of the twentieth century women's voices echoed across the spreading public spaces of Lebanon. While not always—nor surprisingly—in absolute harmony, the words that these women wrote and spoke collectively contested the ideological edifices of "public" and "private" spheres. Their various depictions of "woman" created a complex, conflicting, and multilayered process for the making of an elite "modern." Embedded into these competing narratives were the perspectives of "tradition" which allowed for a "modernity" beyond that derived from the bourgeois domesticity of the "West." This paradoxical relation—where a "tradition" gives rise to a "modernity" that shuns the earlier tradition—leads to a burial of the indigenous and local roots of "modernity" in subtexts that are barely visible but are nonetheless important. The ethos of work which perme-

ated peasant society—both male and female—provided feminists with the "tradition" from which to criticize the proposed gilded enclosure of women in a "private" and idle space. A historical memory of women's labors in the field and in the *mahjar* was a potent tonic against the image of a "weak" woman. The cover of *Fatat Lubnan* placed a young woman in the "pure mountains," away from the city and near peasant villages. The purity and simplicity of "famous women" were characteristics of an imagined and real pastoral life and not typical of city dwellers.[41] Closer to the surface of narratives were the dispatches from the *mahjar,* which included stories not only about the accomplishments of American middle-class women but also about the trials and tribulations of emigrant women.[42] These testimonies to the strength of women belied the notions of a feeble "sex" that could deal with the tumultuous "public" world of commerce and industry. Combined with the new possibilities of "modernity"—education, exploration, and employment—this tradition made for a fluctuating and contested space that did not fit in either "public" or "private" spheres and that was not a pale imitation of the "West."

"Mothering" Society

Despite the compelling nature of these texts of "modernity," we cannot be certain how many women read these articles. Nor are we sure of the readers' reactions to such proclamations of equality. In fact, one could be tempted to discount all these words on the premise that they constituted an intellectual tempest in the proverbial teapot. However, such judgement would be rash and ill-advised in light of other evidence that—at least—shows a point of intersection between words and actions. If we look past feminist criticisms of the middle class and its gender roles, we find other sources that provide us with equally strong indications that the lines separating "private" from "public" were hardly impermeable. More to the point, we find that many women were not only ignoring these boundaries but displacing them, pushing them along as they themselves ventured outward.

Women's "social" work was one of the means and measure of this change. The ideological transformation of "woman" from an inanimate "house" to a "goddess" of the house was balanced partly on her pivotal new role as the guardian of society's morals. She was expected to perform her duty by raising good children, keeping a proper home, and

comforting her world-weary husband. And she was to do it all within the sphere of her home, where she was to be the "absolute sultan." However, it soon became apparent to women who took this expectation seriously (and some did not, but that is another story, which we will tell later) that they could not possibly confine their safekeeping activities to the home. While raising good children was well and fine, many began to wonder about all the "unfortunate souls" that did not have that advantage. What about orphaned girls and boys, the poor and the sick, the abused and widowed women? Who was going to take care of them? This question was all the more pertinent between the 1890s and World War I since the government of the Mountain was quite limited, to say the least, in its social programs and reach. Moreover, village strategies for dealing with poverty were no longer sufficient in an environment where the growth of the state and the market economy had considerably lessened the ability and power of local communities to deal with social crises. As some women pondered these questions, it became apparent to them that the only answer would be to establish public associations that would help alleviate the misery of society and safeguard its morals.

"Mothering" society, as an extension of "mothering" one's family, became an avenue for departure from the confines of the home. These departures were made on a singular and collective basis. Individually, women took it on themselves to donate money to "worthy causes." For example, in 1906 Father Bulus al-Kubursi wanted to build in the village of Rumiyyi an orphanage which would be attached to the local school. For this purpose donations were solicited from emigrants in Brazil and the United States. Lebanese emigrants in Brazil gathered the equivalent of $3,094; more than a third of those who donated the money were women. In acknowledging their generosity, Father Bulus published their names in the newspaper *al-Muhazab.* So it came to be that "Mrs. Lucia widow of Khalil Abu ᶜIza" and "Miss ᶜAfifa the daughter of Khalil Abu ᶜIza" had their names displayed prominently and publicly.[43] *Al-Nahlah,* a newspaper published in Zahleh, was also in the habit of printing lists of names of donors to various charity causes. Within these lists were the names of numerous women—identified either as daughters or wives of a particular man—who had given money to build churches, erect schools, and fund orphanages or hospices. (Significantly, and shortly before World War I, newspapers which were still listing the names of charitable women—such as *al-Bashir* and *al-Muhazab*—identified these contributors by their names without reference to husband or father.) More adventurous, albeit far fewer in number, were

women like Sister Ursula, who, in 1898, traveled to the *mahjar* to gather money from emigrants in order to establish a school for girls in her town of ᶜAmsheet.[44] The handful of women who undertook such journeys outside the confines of the "female" sphere—be it a convent or a house—justified their departures from the ordinary by pointing to the obvious needs of the poor.

Contributions by such individuals were publicly more fleeting than those made by groups of women who organized themselves into associations dedicated to charities and philanthropy. Salma Saᵓigh described the collective work of such associations in these wistful words: "What can I recount to you about women's [public] works . . . ? I think about them and columns of those stricken with tuberculosis, the hungry, naked, blind, working and miserable and abandoned mothers parade before me. All these wounded spirits are comforted and healed [by women's associations]."[45] While the early history of these associations is difficult to ascertain, many of them were quite well established by the 1920s.[46] For example, as early as 1910 a benevolent association of women was established in Brummana to support an orphanage run by local nuns. In 1922 the Bitramiya Helping Hand Association established a free school for young orphaned girls where they would be taught handicrafts. In addition, the association dedicated itself to finding for the widowed or divorced woman income which "would keep her from begging for money to support herself."[47] Three years later, a few middle-class women from the village of Hasroun founded the Hasrouni Union for Ladies. They, like their counterparts from the town of Bitram, took it on themselves to assist families headed by single women and to establish a school that "is dedicated to educating girls and directing them to face the responsibility of life."[48] In Tripoli, two such organizations were founded in the late 1910s with the titles Renaissance of Young Women and Zanbakat al-Fayhaᵓ. Both were equally dedicated to uplifting the poor and caring for women.[49] While many similar associations were established throughout the Mountain—sometimes independently and at other times as affiliates of religious institutions—they all shared an emphasis on social welfare and philanthropic work that necessitated a female presence in the "public" world.

As these social workers pushed beyond the boundaries of the house and into the "public" sphere, some among them began to extend their gaze beyond welfare activities. A group of women from the town of Kusba were among those who overstepped the boundaries of mainstream femininity. They established the Kusba Women's Benevolent Association, which resembled all the previous women's associations, but they went

one step further, as the anthem they used to begin their weekly meetings testifies:

My precious country, on me depends
A renaissance before it is too late
A renaissance that makes "Leila" and
"Sumaya" amongst those who can vote.[50]

These (badly rendered) poems of political demands were not the product of an epiphany. Instead, they were the result of a long and tedious debate about the boundaries of a woman's life, a discussion which crossed paths with the feminist literature we encountered earlier in this chapter. In one recorded instance of such discussions in 1912, we find Salma Kalila addressing the women of this association at their behest. The minutes of this meeting speak of a speech on the subject of women's role in "uplifting the nation . . . which was interrupted several times by applause." According to the recorder of this event, the applause was particularly loud when Kalila announced in her forthright manner that "society and the nation will never rise as long as women [were] shackled in the house."[51]

"His Godmother Is . . . "

Other avenues for women's entrance into the "public" arena appear distant from this overtly political discourse, but they were not any less important. In their own more subtle and limited ways, these other outlets were shaping ideas about self and community among the middle classes of Lebanon, and they did so in a manner that perforated the gendered "spheres" of life. One such change was the appearance of many women in public ceremonies and rituals from which they had been previously absent. These rituals were instrumental in the construction of the symbols of a "modern" civil society. They were a theater of social relations through which a hierarchy of power was projected publicly. The appearance of women within this theater was not a matter of cosmetic inclusion but was rather necessary for the clearest articulation of what it meant to be a member of the middle class. Yet in this necessity was a channel for transforming the gender role of "woman" from being one of ostensibly passive observation to one of active participation.

Annual graduation ceremonies displayed this potential. With the proliferation of schools throughout the mountain, parents and educators

were eager to put on display the accomplishments of the students. The first did so out of parental pride as well as the desire to emphasize their social status. School administrators considered such pageantry an occasion to demonstrate the importance of the school in producing the "leaders of tomorrow." And speakers at these functions took the opportunity to present their thoughts on public matters. For example, at one such school function in 1908, Father Alphonse—the director of Jesuit schools in Lebanon—spoke "of the need for courage and steadfastness in the Catholic faith, and thanked the people for their love for the school. . . . [He concluded by] calling for the support of religion, science and morals whose light continues to shine in the sky of modernity."[52] In other words, these ceremonies were occasions for the articulation of civil society—a community that slowly transcended clan and local boundaries and that contained a contradictory mix of ideas.

One indication of the rising importance of these public events was the number of people who attended them. For instance, in 1903 Ravndal, the U.S. consul general in Beirut, reported that at the "Field Day" of the Syrian Protestant College over five thousand people were in attendance, when only five years before "these exercises were decidedly primitive and meagerly attended."[53] While secondary schools certainly had lower attendance, their ceremonies were no less manifest in the public lives of villages and towns. In the town of Brummana, the Friends School became the focal point of public life at least once a year when graduates (male and female) were heralded in speeches and pomp. Mar Ish^{c}aya Catholic school, in the vicinity of Brummana, competed with its own annual celebration, where "prizes were distributed to the winners, and the ceremony was attended by a large group of notables and townspeople."[54] Similarly, in the villages of Khinshara, Qlay^{c}at, Ghazir, Shimlan, and Kfershima and in the towns of Jubayl, Batrun, Sidon, and Jounieh, ceremonies were held to celebrate the graduating students. In all these instances, villagers and townspeople converged on the school premises to participate in the pageantry and to establish new social links through that participation. Announcements in the newspapers and magazines about these events were meant only to project their influence beyond the present audience to a larger one and to thereby amplify the significance of their symbols and rituals.

Under these circumstances, women's attendance at such events was a distinctly obvious entry into the public spaces. When they attended as relatives of graduates, these women sat next to their fathers or husbands in full view of other men and women. Their presence was an indication

how "modern" a father or husband was and projected beyond the household the ideal of the middle-class family. But women's impact was arguably far more pronounced when they stood up to speak at these celebrations. So it was when Julia Dimashqiya addressed the graduates of 1912 at the Friends School in Brummana; her participation emphasized to them and to the audience that women are equal to men.[55] In this extremely public venue, she challenged the separation of spheres that the schools were supposed to be indoctrinating into the students. That was also the case when Zaynab Fawaz was invited in 1908 to speak to the students of the American Missionary school in Kfershima. Her subject was also the position of women in society, and, in order to establish the need for greater freedoms for women, she peppered her one-hour speech with biographies of famous women, both "Eastern"—the queen Shajarat al-Durr—and "Western"—Marie Curie.

Even in the generally more conservative Jesuit schools, women were making public appearances. For example, the Catholic newspaper *al-Bashir* reported in 1908 that: "on Saturday and Sunday, the 20th and 21st of July, the [students] of The Hearts of Jesus and Mary girls' school in the village of Khinshara acted out a play . . . that was attended by many of the people and notables of the surrounding villages. . . . Both times their attendance of it [the play] was such that they filled the hall to capacity. And they all greatly appreciated the performance of the troupe of girls . . . to the point where applause was abundant."[56] The article was written in such a matter-of-fact manner one could easily gloss over the mention of girls as actresses in a public play. Yet the innocuous language belies the fact that not long before this statement was made acting was hardly considered a morally uplifting activity in general, let alone for young girls in front of an audience. A debate which took place thousands of miles away clarifies this point. Not long after the arrival of the first Lebanese immigrant into the United States, a discussion arose about whether "Syrian" women should act in public plays.[57] In 1908 Dr. Haykal al-Khouri, an opponent of women's acting, wrote, quoting Teddy Roosevelt, "I prefer for the woman to be ignorant and pure rather than . . . an actress and . . . fallen." From this beginning al-Khouri proceeded to list the reasons for his opposition to women's acting. Aside from repeating in several paragraphs the supposition that acting will defile a woman, al-Khouri contended that such activities take away from the primary role of a woman, namely to be a "pure and good mother." Acting, then, was a threat to the distinction between the "private" and "public."[58] From this perspective, plays put on by young women in Lebanon were

clearly a renegotiation of the boundaries of the "private" sphere. Even if these events were contained within the privatized space of a "moral" Catholic school, they still presented an interaction between two spheres that ideally were to be separated.

At a different level, evidence of middle-class women's "intrusion" into public space comes from still another source: baptismal records in Lebanese village churches. These records of a public ceremony acknowledging the entry of new members into the village describe some of the parameters of the life of the community. In particular, they identified the social relations and position of the child within the village by noting the name(s) of his godparent(s). While all such records would note the name of the godfather, that of the godmother was acknowledged less. The frequency of that public acknowledgment is one indication of the presence of women in (or their absence from) the public life of the villages and towns.

Consider the village of Bishmizeen.[59] In a 1940 study of the village, the sociologist Afif Tannous compiled baptismal records from 1816 through 1912. Spanning a century these records can be divided (for our purposes) into three phases: 1816–1838, 1869–1873, and 1909–1912. Of the thirty-three baptisms recorded in the church's registry between 1816 and 1838, all were of boys. Of course, it is quite certain that girls were born sometime during those twenty-two years. Moreover, it is unlikely that their exclusion from the public ritual of baptism was accidental. Rather, it would seem that infant girls were not publicly acknowledged as members of the community. A look at the text of the registry confirms this. A typical record from that period reads: "On the 6th of June [18]21 was born Jirjis Nasif Jiha, and his godfather is Hanna al-Khuri Yusuf." In addition, there is no mention of a godmother anywhere in these thirty-three records, while the godfather is identified by name in thirty-two of them. Such a conspicuous absence of women in one of the few official and major ceremonies in the life of this village coincides with the male public avoidance of naming women.

The situation began to change slightly by the late 1860s. In the period extending from 1869 to 1873, girls are mentioned in the baptismal records, and a few godmothers are listed. Read, for example, the following baptismal record: "On the 12th of November [18]69 was born Sa^{c}ada the daughter of N^{c}imi Barakat." Furthermore, in forty-two of these records a godmother is listed. Clearly, then, women were becoming more visible, if these records are any indication. Yet, this visibility was still minimal; only seven of those godmothers were identified by a personal name, as opposed

to the thirty-five of thirty-eight godfathers whose names were listed in the records. Rather than being provided with a distinct and individual identity, a godmother was predominantly identified solely by relationship to the child or to her husband. In twenty-four of the forty-two mentions of a godmother, she was noted as *jaddatuha* (her grandmother), ^{c}*ammatuha* (her paternal aunt), *khalatiha* (her maternal aunt), and by similar references. In another eight instances the godmothers were recognized only as the wives of particular men. One was described as "his godmother *hurmat* [the wife] of Hanna Musa Ya^{c}qub"; another was "her godmother the wife of her maternal uncle." This practice of begrudging women a public individual identity becomes all the more unmistakable when we note that only two godfathers were recorded—during this time—as "his grandfather" or what have you, and none were ever identified by affiliation with a wife.

A greater transformation of these practices took place by the first decade of the twentieth century and coincided with a rise in the return of emigrants from the United States. Between 1909 and 1912 another eighty baptismal records were entered into the church's registry. In over half the cases where a godmother is noted, her personal name accompanies the notation "his/her godmother." While this was still less than the number of times the godfathers' names was written down, it was notably higher than in the previous two periods.[60] Proportionally, the number of godmothers who were identified solely by their kinship relationship to the girl or boy went down from 57 percent to 19 percent. And the kinship relationship of the godfather went up from 18 percent to 28 percent. A typical entry from these records would read: "His godfather is his paternal uncle Mikhail Ishaq Mufarrij, and his godmother is his maternal aunt Angelina." Finally, in a few exceptional cases the name of the infant's mother was recorded alongside that of the father.

This historical pattern was not limited to Bishmizeen. In the village of Lehfed, the registry of the church tells a similar story. While almost no women were mentioned in records dating from the 1860s, their names—as children being baptized or as godmothers attending baptisms—begin, in the 1890s, to make sporadic appearances, and then, after the turn of the century, they make sustained appearances in the baptismal books. Further to the south, in Rwaysit al-N^{c}uman, the records of the village's church bear testimony to the same shift. Among the women there who were mentioned by name as a godmother none equaled Habouba Khatir. According to her son—who wrote her biography—Habouba was a godmother to about three hundred people in the thirty-four years before her death in 1929.[61] Even if we allow for exaggeration arising out of filial de-

votion, Habouba still broke records with her ubiquitous presence on that registry. Swinging back to the north of the Mountain, in remote Hadeth al-Jobbé, we find that by the 1910s women were also making public appearances at the baptisms of children of the village. In this town, located so far away in the Mountain, emigration had given many women the wealth and prestige necessary for them to stride into the "man's world." Thus, Jamiley al-Kassis, who had spent many years in Mexico, came back to the village, bought land with her husband, and became one of the town's luminaries. Such a rise in stature was attested to by the records of her local church, where her name was listed in many of the baptisms.[62]

This abridged history of baptismal records demonstrates one facet of the growing public presence of women as individuals. As rituals that connected children to the community, these baptisms were a barometer of the importance of particular individuals in accomplishing this process. In other words, most families were eager to have a godparent whose social status would augur well for the future of the child. Thus, we can justifiably surmise that when women began to emerge as active participants in this ritual transfer of social power, their prominence in the public life of the village must have experienced a proportionate elevation. Paradoxically, the greatest degree of this elevation occurred around the same time the notion of a "private" sphere for women was being idealized in the press and built into the houses of the middle class.

Roots of Resistance

The contradiction is not surprising. While many middle-class women may have embraced—and even cherished—the ideals underlying life as "goddess" of the house, they did not necessarily relinquish the "public" space to men. Women who traveled to the Americas and worked or who stayed behind in the village raising a family while their husbands made money in the *mahjar* were quite accustomed to "public" life. They worked in the fields of the Mountain or on the streets of the *mahjar* cities, and they were very involved in "public" life. Many emigrants—in the words of one emigrant man—were "strong women" who steered the family in the direction of prosperity and worked long and hard to make ends meet.[63] In the process, they gained social and economic power that enabled them to determine—if not absolutely then at least partially—their role as "women" within family and community. This historical experience,

which found its way into the writings of feminists, also meant that not all women were simply going to relinquish their power and subside into the folds of the middle-class house. In other words, "modernity"—with its constituent "scientific" knowledge—was not the only source of resistance to the gendered roles that were being proposed for the middling classes. Rather, and as I noted before, the "traditions" of peasant and emigrant life were equally stubborn elements that stood in the face of an idealized role for women.

Women's experience as peddlers in the *mahjar* gave them a greater sense of control over their destiny than they had had before. For example, one woman had traveled alone from Lebanon to Indiana to work. There she married a slightly younger man, and the two went peddling together. A few years later—after a son and two daughters were born to them—she began to notice how financially unstable her husband was, particularly as he "liked the company of young girls and would give them money." So she went back to Lebanon with him and finally left him because he would not "mend his ways."[64] Admittedly, this story does not tell us much about "public" and "private" spaces in Lebanon, but it certainly provides an example of the strength some women acquired in their work overseas. A more general affirmation of this change comes from a series of articles in *al-Huda* that attacked women's emigration. Ostensibly, the author—Yusuf Jirjis Zakham—wrote because he was concerned that women's emigration was leading to the collapse of morals and society in Lebanon. However, the subtext of his long essays was that work in the *mahjar* was undermining the "proper" gender relations because it gave women money and independence.[65] As he wrote, "When the woman comes to control matters and the man gives up his throne then the world will become unstable. For a woman was created to work *within* an honorable circle without transgressing the limits of wisdom and morals."[66]

Although distinctly alarmist in tone, these words of warning still held a kernel of truth. Emigration, as we have seen, did force emigrants to reexamine the meaning of "man" and "woman" and the roles each was supposed to play within the matrix of social relations. In other words, while the world was not ending, as Zakham was predicting, it was changing. Women were most certainly stepping outside that "honorable circle"—a euphemism for the household—in order to earn a living. Once outside, they were reluctant to be encircled by new traditions and boundaries. More to the point, on returning to Mount Lebanon, these women did not completely discard this reluctance nor their hard-earned financial

prowess. Rather, as members of families—which had been left behind in Lebanon or which had accompanied them—these women were negotiating their new roles. Being a *sitt al-bayt* was certainly an element of that role, but so was the inclination to step outside that role and do something else in addition or instead.

In other words, as much as emigrants brought back with them the seeds of a middle-class society, they also carried along the arguments, debates, and tensions which were part and parcel of that phenomenon. Letters and money sent by women working abroad attested to these tensions and raised question about the definition of a woman's role within a patriarchal society. For example, should the children of "Yusuf" look up to their mother, who supports them with her work overseas, as the head of the family?[67] How about the children of a woman who came back and built a house for her family with money she had made working in New York? Or can "Antoun" dictate the allocation of resources to his wife when it is she who receives the money from a relative in America, and it is she who owns the family's land? All these were real questions that became even more pressing when emigrant women went back to Mount Lebanon. The answers were not singularly uniform. It is certain that there were instances where—after returning from the *mahjar*—some retreated almost completely into the "private" sphere. However, such occurrences were rare. Far more commonly, rural middle-class women did spend an inordinate time managing the household, but they also stepped out for social visits, funerals, weddings, baptisms, graduations of their sons and daughters from school, religious meetings, and the occasional shopping trip to the city. These were not merely forays into a prohibited "public" space but regular parts of a normal life that emigrant women had grown accustomed to in Boston or Buenos Aires.

But we must not assume that only emigrant women refused to be relegated to the status of a household ornament. Women who stayed behind waiting for their husbands to return from the *mahjar* were no more timid in claiming their right to be involved in life beyond the house. Take a look at the story of Saydeh, the wife of one Assaf Khater.[68] When Assaf decided in 1893 to travel overseas to make money, Saydeh was pushed—whether she liked it or not—into the unacknowledged dual role of father and mother. She had to continue doing her regular tasks in addition to assuming the work that should have been done by Assaf. Moreover, she had to safeguard the welfare and interests of her children not only against the rest of the village but also at times against her in-laws. Finally, because she was a married woman living alone with her children, tongues inevitably

wagged in the village about her morals. This gossip only added to the pressures with which she had to contend because of the absence of her husband. So, while she did not starve to death, Saydeh was hardly a happy woman during the eight years of separation, when Assaf was in Uruguay.

Nor was she overjoyed when Assaf returned in 1898. It was difficult to pick up the pieces of a flimsy relationship that had been based for the past eight years on rare, short, and impersonal letters. The breakdown of their relationship was also accelerated by changed behavior. While he did return to the village, he could not fully bring himself to be integrated into the traditional village life. His desire to display the wealth he accumulated in Uruguay by spending large sums of money in the village's coffee shop did not sit well with Saydeh. Their relationship deteriorated slowly but surely, and Assaf's relations with his children fared no better. The oldest boy, Selim, was especially resentful of his father for leaving them for such a long time. The other two children did not even recognize him when he first came back, nor did they grow closer to him in the following years. Finally, two years after Assaf's return, matters got so bad between the couple that Saydeh took her sons Selim and Nessim and left for Uruguay, never to come back. Clearly, this was not a woman who was content to stay home and play the role of a middle-class wife, especially when Assaf was not willing to play the role of a "good" middle-class husband.

Even if extreme, the tensions within Saydeh's household could not have been unique. Many of the men who had lived in the *mahjar* brought back expectations which included new gender roles that their wives—who had stayed behind—were not eager to play. Dressing in new clothes and messing with make-up were not habits that these peasant women were used to spending money and time on. Nor were they in the habit of staying bound by the walls of a house where they would idle away the day arranging furniture. Finally, their approach to child rearing did not entail help with lessons at the end of the day or engaging the children in games. In other words, it would have been difficult for them to become overnight the model of middle-class women, even if they wanted to do so. This gap between the desires of the husband and the readiness of the wife induced tensions. If every family did not collapse under the stress, areas of contention had to be dealt with, and that kept the middle-class ideal model simply that: an idea, not a reality.

Even when women were willing to abide by these new rules of femininity and motherhood, tensions were still ever-present. They derived from the new patriarchal bargain at the heart of the middle-class family. This contract presumed that in return for women's acceptance of a house-

bound existence, men had to accept a social life centered around the family. This style was quite different from peasant family life, where husband and wife occupied—for most of their lives—separate social spheres that traversed work and living spaces on almost equal terms. In other words, if women were to be at home and men outside at work, separated for most of the day, then they must come together at night to reinforce the bonds of their relationship away from the rest of the world. But if we are to believe various contemporary commentators, this was rarely the case. Men, more than women, were not keeping up their end of the bargain. Elias Tweyni remarked on this when he wrote that "many women have the right [to] complain for they found sadness and hardship when they expected to drink a pure chalice of love [after marriage]; . . . many times the man errs against his wife when he forgets his duties towards her."[69] Among the duties enumerated were treating wives as friends, paying attention to their needs, and showing them love. Other commentators complained that by "spending time gambling, drinking and staying out of the house [until] the late hours of the night and committing immoral deeds" men were abandoning their familial and marital responsibilities.[70] In those cases, wrote Zakham, "one cannot blame the poor women who leave their husbands and homes."[71]

Tweyni did not spare women from responsibility for the "failures" of the middle-class family. His biggest complaint was that women seemed to have a closer relationship with their women neighbors than with their husbands. He preached that even when husbands were inattentive, "it is not proper for a woman to tell her woman neighbor of matters that are private [within the marriage], because as happens so many times that neighbor will insinuate suspicions into her mind and make her commit actions that only make things worse so evil things happen. . . . As the popular proverb says 'the woman corrupts the woman.'"[72] Ester Muyal concurred with this thought. Writing almost transcendentally about housework, she emphasized that "women must put aside their frivolous social life [with other women] and focus on cleaning their house and pleasing their husbands."[73] That such commentaries were still deemed necessary is a good indication that women were not embracing the ideal of the middle-class woman. Rather than becoming isolated "goddesses" within the temple of matrimony, women continued to spend a considerable part of their lives within a circle of women relatives and neighbors. Moreover, they persisted in drawing part of their identity from homosocial networks which existed beyond the boundaries of the "house."

Romantic Love

Not all the tensions were between husband and wife; many pitted parents against their children. Education—which was meant to prepare middle-class boys for careers and girls for marriage—was largely responsible. For a few education provided the tools necessary to see the contradictions inherent in their own society and to question the "traditions" underlying them. The feminist literature we encountered earlier is one example of that development. But, for most, education simply opened a gap between themselves and their parents by giving them a tool for exploring their own individuality—a primarily subjective and male identity that was being ideologically constructed and placed in relation to a feminine "society."[74] In this process the patriarchal rankings according to age and sex, which were basic to early Lebanese conceptions of social order, slowly came to be challenged and questioned.

Love was a central avenue of this journey. On the one hand, romantic love was being proposed as the true conduit to a happy and satisfying marriage—novels, articles, poetry, and speeches all said so.[75] In 1895 one writer proclaimed that "the main basis for marriage should be the exchange of love between the spouses. . . . For that reason it is necessary to give the young man the freedom to choose the young woman that has attained a high standing in his eye and has occupied his heart, and to give the young woman the choice in calling to her whoever attracts her emotions and her heart."[76] Thirty years later, at a women's political conference, a speaker was still reiterating the same theme. She announced to the attendees that "the basis upon which the selection of a wife and husband should be made is exchanged love."[77] On the other hand, a great number of betrothals were still being arranged to fit the needs of the family. No greater evidence can be found than in the oft-repeated critiques of arranged marriages like the one quoted above. This dissonance between ideal and reality was a source of tension and contention within the middle-class family.

Feeding the imagination of young men and women of the middle classes was the novel, a new genre of Arabic literature that was revolutionary by definition.[78] While not quite as respectable as the biography, this literature still provided a text which described the category of "woman" and explored her social relations to friends, family, and, most powerfully, to lovers. Romance novels, which, between 1890 and 1914, were either serialized in the Lebanese and the Egyptian press or sold as

books, raised the ire of various observers for different reasons. Those who were more conservative registered their distaste for such "foreign" notions as romantic love and declared them quite inappropriate for women of "Eastern" societies. Others, generally more liberal, decried the frivolity of romance novels and pronounced them an absolute waste of time.[79] Underlying both claims is the recognition that these novels were an implicit critique of middle-class society. As Richard Gray noted for German bourgeois literature, these novels were "a muffled protest by middle-class writers against the alienating and reifying tendencies of the bourgeois episteme within whose (signifying) parameters they and their texts necessarily operate."[80]

To understand this perceived threat, we need only look at the subjects of these early Arabic romance novels. A common thread ran through most of them: a young woman struggles to sort out the complexities of her feelings toward a young man. A competing woman, disapproving and unyielding parents, or another man intrude into her relationship and force her to evaluate her love. In one such story—*Countess Sarah*—we read the following impassioned plea on the part of young man: "I swear to you that I would die for you; I beseech you to listen to what I have to say because you must know the truth so that you will not continue to blame me. I never loved Sarah after I fell in love with you."[81] Within this story and many others, the young female protagonist was portrayed as an individual whose decisions were ultimately hers to make—even if they were encumbered by family considerations. This radical notion was made possible by the power of love, even as it stood in testament for that power. This was made explicit in a novel emblazoned with the dramatic title *Martyr of Love.* On one of its pages, we find Emily riding in a carriage alongside Mr. Falkland.

> While he was looking for something in the pocket of the carriage, his hand touched Emily's so he squeezed it without paying attention, because he felt a power that made him do so. When Emily felt the strength of the touch she pulled her hand away quickly, and Falkland noticed that it was visibly shaking so he did not dare raise his eyes to her face. But his touch of his beloved's hand at that moment was enough to cause great changes in his life.[82]

Other romance novels presented love as the highest ideal to which a woman—and a man—could aspire. In one such tale—*Love Not Money*—a young woman's marriage to an older but wealthy man was being arranged by her mother. Painting a fairly unattractive image of the mother, the author wrote: "Truth is that marriage did not occupy the thoughts of

Canair much. But her mother, who cared more for material than essential things, had painted marriage as something that is the duty of every young woman. . . . But she [the mother] said nothing of familial love; . . . but Canair . . . had very different opinion[s from] . . . her mother's, and she saw in marriage more than inheriting money and wealth."[83] These sentiments were equally common in romance novels that were located in an "Eastern" context. Jirji Zaidan (1861–1914) was among the most prolific authors of such stories, which were predominantly written as historical fiction. With titles such *The Bride of Furgana, The Beauty of Karbala*ʾ, and *The Young Woman of Ghassan,* Zaidan evoked romantic nostalgia for the Arab past and its "traditions" of courtship and *hubb,* or love. In each tale a woman and a man struggle—amidst political turmoil—to overcome all the obstacles placed in the way of their love. In each story love is seen as a virtue that should—even if it did not in reality—erase class boundaries and dispense with social customs.

Contrasted with such flights of fantasy, reality for young women was surely less charming. One contemporary described this contrast in writing:

> The worst is what is we see so common amongst many nowadays, who have little experience and whose homes have not been visited by knowledge, and who force a young woman to marry a man for whom she has no feelings of love; . . . and if she asked her parents to bypass him they assume [she asks this] because of her lack of politeness and gratitude. And they proceed to forcibly convince her and tell her reasons and excuses that are meant to prove to her their claim with regard to her mistake and the preference of marriage to that whom they see fit for her. . . . And they continue to do so until she is obliged to accept the will of her oppressors and she spends a life that is worse than the fire of hell in the company of that husband.[84]

Even when the immediate family accepted a marriage based on love, the extended family was not so charitable. For example, in the village of ᶜAyn el Kharoube, the dominant Gemayel clan had engaged in strictly endogamous marriage for at least a century. Thus, in 1903 it was a momentous—and some said scandalous—event when a Gemayel woman received approval from her parents to marry a young man from the lesser known Sayyah family, with whom she had fallen in love. However, on the day of the wedding, the patriarch of the Gemayel clan in the village broke up the wedding by tipping over all the food pots, and "the young couple was forced to emigrate" to Texas.[85]

On one side we find, then, romantic images which idolized love as individual freedom from parents, even when it led a woman—through

marriage—into the middle-class "female" sphere. On the other side was the reality which most young women and men experienced: parents who were indeed quite instrumental in the selection of a husband. Caught in the middle, some young men and women tugged and pulled against the ties that bound them, even if few ever succeeded in breaking free (and that possibility must have been quite unsettling for many young people). Here again, we need not exaggerate the scale of this change to appreciate its impact. Love had existed before, and a few men and women had eloped when their parents refused to allow them to marry. Still, as we noted previously, marriage was more often than not a family affair meant to solidify social and economic relations within the clan. In that context, love was an option that would possibly develop after betrothal. If it did not, it was no tragedy since marriage was meant for procreation and not individual happiness. Such considerations contrasted sharply with the expectations that some middle-class young women and men harbored about romantic love. These expectations made for many disappointments in marriage, as attested to by the numerous articles that complained that many husbands treated their wives like "servants" and that counseled men to treat with their wives with love and kindness "even after the honeymoon is over."[86]

The hypocrisy of this contradiction was also noted by not a few fiction writers, whether in the *mahjar* or in Lebanon. Khalil Gibran was one who incorporated a critique of the social reality into his short stories. In "Warda al-Hani," published in 1908 in *Al-Arwah al-mutamarrida (Spirits Rebellious),* we read a blunt indictment of the hypocrisy of middle-class society. Rashid Na^c^man, a middle-class man, complains to his friend, the narrator, that his wife—Warda al-Hani—has deserted him for a pauper. A few days later the narrator meets Warda and hears her singing. In the ensuing encounter, Warda tells the story of her marriage to Rashid, who was her senior by twenty-two years. Despite his kindness and generosity, Warda was not happy in her marriage because "I knew that a woman's happiness is not dependent on a man's fame, his domination or his generosity . . . but in love binding her spirit and his together." She left Rashid for the man she loved because she saw herself as "whoring and deceitful in the house of Rashid Na^c^man because he made me his bed companion through the rules of custom and tradition before heaven made me his wife by the ruling of the spirit and affection."[87] Middle-class morality was thus turned on its head. What was sanctioned as a lawful and moral marriage became prostitution, and what would have been considered immoral became sanctioned by God and heaven. Hence, middle-class social custom and "tradition" appear as the underlying cause for unhappiness.

However, these narratives were as complex and conflicting in their depiction of gender as was the genre of biography. Most proclaimed the right of a woman to choose her beloved without interference from her family and without succumbing to the consideration of wealth. However, none could imagine a woman who did not crave the love of a man or who did not desire to be ultimately married. None could conceive of a sexuality other than physical intimacy between a man and a woman. In other words, marriage was still considered the "natural" state of existence for a young woman outside her parental household, even as these tales spoke of different ways to get to that state. Women who appeared in these tales of romance aspired to be nothing more than lovers. Thus, the love that was supposed to liberate a woman from her patriarchal prison appears only to land her in another; this one of her own choice. These limitations in the critique of middle-class society arise from the fact that most authors were themselves of that class. Hence, their verbal barbs were directed from within an edifice and had the effect of pushing at its boundaries and displacing them without destroying them. This political-critical equivocation stems from "an ideologically motivated retraction of their own spontaneous critical insights into the guiding sociopolitical, economic, and discursive practices of the bourgeois episteme."[88]

Despite this inherent contradiction, romance novels—like the biographies of "famous women"—created a critical space from which to question the boundaries inscribed in middle-class gender roles. For fleeting moments, these novels allow their female protagonists a subjective individuality that extracts them from the larger objectified category of "woman." In the context of the turn of the century these novels offer a radical rejection of the "rational" and stultifying domesticity and hypocritical middle-class morality that were the hallmarks of an indigenous "modernity" in the making.

Conclusion

The making of a middle class in Lebanon was a chaotic and complex affair replete with contradictions that do not allow for facile categorization or conclusions. On the one hand, most occupants of that social class likely fit the "typical" notion of a middle-class family. They lived in a *harat* furnished with the "things of civilization" (chairs, sofas, tables),

sent their children to school, wore *franji* or at least semi-*franji* clothes, and tried to replicate their lives and propagate their class through the arranged marriages of their children. On the other hand, to accept that this state of affairs as the lot of the average middle-class family is to understand only a partial reality for, in every one of its facets, the middle-class family was beset by tensions and contradictions.

Some of these strains were evident in the external criticisms leveled mainly by women who were not willing to accept the "public-private" divide which relegated them to domesticity. Obviously, there were strong women throughout the history of Mount Lebanon, women who saw their world as an unfair division between men and women, and even a few who tried to think of a better way to live. Yet, there was something substantially and fundamentally different about the women we have talked about; those who saw the dawn of the twentieth century: they were middle-class intellectuals. Their social rank allowed them the opportunity to acquire the tools necessary to look critically at the lot of women in their society and to advance alternative views of women's role in that community. They had the time to articulate and represent women's lives as they perceived them; for the most part they advocated a departure from how men saw women's responsibilities and duties. Some spoke of a naturally ordained equality whose delicate balance was tragically destroyed by men. Others began to juxtapose the "modernity" of the "West" and the "backward" traditions of their own "Eastern" world. They argued that progress in their society could come about only when women were given greater rights; in this way they linked "nation" and "gender" as other feminists had done in Egypt, Turkey, Iran, South Asia, and China. Still others spoke of women's lives as historical constructs that are not timeless and thus are subject to change.

In all these instances a door to change was pried open much farther than it ever had been in the past. In other words, these women challenged the premises of a "modern" that would relegate them to a disempowered "private" sphere and proposed an alternative "modern" that would allow them to step beyond the political, social, economic, and cultural limitations of the "house." These arguments were formed through references to the accomplishments of prominent "Eastern" and "Western" women and through an appeal to "scientific" proofs of the rationality of women and their capacity to equal men. Embedded in the midst of these challenging narratives were the traditions of women's labor alongside men. Women's work in fields of wheat, in silk factories, or on the streets of Philadelphia were integral—albeit in a submerged form—to images of

strong women that contradicted the enfeebled "feminine" relegated to the confining envelope of domesticity.

Other tensions emanated from the contradictions inherent in the disparity between the ideal and the realities of the middle-class family. Some husbands—a majority, one is tempted to say—did not treat their wives "as their friends," equal in every sense of the word. Some wives were not willing to be obsequious to their husbands, even if they accepted it as a given that they should take care of the house and children. They saw no need to limit their lives to an existence within the walls of a *harat* but persisted in drawing comfort, happiness, and identity from visits to their neighbors and relatives—preferably of the same class. Some women made speeches, were godmothers at baptisms, and did "charity" work—all activities that propelled them into the "public" spaces of Lebanon. Then there were the young men and women who took the whole romance thing to heart. Manifesting their freedom as individuals, they read novels and dreamed of passionate romances even when they were rarely capable—or willing, for that matter—to marry their beloved. Young women dressed in elaborate *franji* fashions and sauntered into the "public" sphere in order to find a man to marry and then—presumably—retreat into the domestic sphere.

Yet, amidst this tumult, all involved still coalesced around the assumption that the middle-class family was the ideal and the salvation for society and nation. Feminist critics did not want a return to peasant life, even though consciously and unconsciously their critique of the cult of domesticity derived from historical memories of peasant women in the village, the factory, and the *mahjar.* Rather, these intellectuals wanted an improvement in middle-class life. Women who participated in charity work simply wanted to "uplift" the less fortunate to their "modern" standards of living and morality. And the ideal of romance was grounded in the discourses of middle-class novels—European or Arab. One woman, seeking a wife for her son, said it best. She wrote, in an open letter to him, "I sought the wealthy women, . . . but I found after experience that they are arrogant . . . and wasteful which is hateful in women. So I went instead to poor women, . . . but I saw that ignorance was rampant amongst them . . . and the likes of those you certainly do not want to befriend. So I went repeating to myself: the best of things is in the middle, and I began to look for an educated and well-mannered young woman from amidst the middle class."[89] From this perspective, the *harat* as well as *Fatat Lubnan* were equally critical elements in the making of a middle class whose occupants were beset by contentious arguments but unified in their belief in themselves as the "modern" future of Lebanon.

7

Epilogue

The Making of a Middle Class

In 1924 Assaf Khater—a return emigrant—decided to send his youngest son, Fouad, to a Jesuit finishing school in the town of Jubayl. Assaf and his family lived in the village of Lehfed, a six-hour donkey ride through the mountains to the coast. The distance meant that Fouad—who was twelve at the time—had to live in Jubayl for the duration of the school terms. As the school did not accommodate boarders, Assaf rented a small room in a house in which he installed Fouad and his older sister Najibé. Najibé was to take care of her younger brother as well as attend a girls' school run by local nuns. This was a most unusual arrangement, particularly since Najibé was only in her mid-teens, and yet there she was living without a chaperon in a rented room, far from family and village. Moreover, sending two children that far away to give them schooling could not have been an easy matter for their father or mother, let alone for Fouad or Najibé. Assaf and his wife, Malakeh, who were both illiterate, went to such lengths because they wanted better lives for their children. They wanted Najibé to marry "well" and for Fouad to obtain a job in the growing government bureaucracy; both dreams required more and better education. Clearly, Assaf—and most peasant emigrants—returned with the determination that their children were not to be peasants, but something akin to middle class.[1]

This transformation was all the more remarkable because, for generations before, the assumptions were that children would remain in the

village of their parents (even though many moved to neighboring villages) and that they would take up the same tasks (and most did). Their aspirations were to be grounded in their land, which they would pass on to their own children. They were expected to marry a paternal cousin, or at least someone from the village, and to raise children who would carry on the traditions of the clan. In other words, the children of peasants were supposed to be peasants. Emigration brought about a break from that past and its expectations. When Assaf and multitudes of other men and women traveled to the Americas between 1890 and 1914, they took the first step away from their own past. Leaving their villages with the intent to return financially better off, these emigrants were irrevocably transformed by their experience of new and hegemonic cultures and societies. Even those who struggled to retain a distinct sense of self amidst infringing cultural forces were ironically changed by the effort exerted. In reaching back to their immediate history for the certainty of "traditions," they re-created memories of a "home" that was in fact distinct from the one they left behind. Thus, when emigrants finally returned to the Mountain, they felt a disjunction between what they had spent years imagining and what they were facing. The contrast—muted in some instances and striking in others—forced on them the realization that they had changed and that the those who had stayed behind in the Mountain had also changed. This social and cultural dislocation caused emigrants returning from the *mahjar* to forge for themselves a new place in the villages and towns they had left behind. And in doing so they changed Mount Lebanon.

This change was not an immediate event, but it was a pronounced one. And it was colored with the incongruity of emigrants mixing and matching "modernity" and "tradition" to suit their particular desires, needs, and circumstances. They traveled across half the world only to come back to the same village. They built large ornate houses right over their old hovels. They worked long days and nights peddling so that they could come back and become landowners—no longer poor peasants, but rich ones. They were, for the most part, illiterate, but they were bent on educating their children. They allowed their daughters to wear *franji* clothes but assumed that the mores and values of classical patriarchy would hold. They sported timepieces as status symbols but were loathe to accept the dictates of the clock in their own lives.

In all these regards, their lives make a travesty of the theoretical dichotomy of modernity and tradition. Rather than move from one preestablished historical evolutionary step to the next, these emigrants

shaped their own world in a myriad of ways. They infused it with meaning, traditions, and styles that all formed a kaleidoscope of identities. They did not become "Western" anymore than they were "traditional." They simply changed the way they lived. I am not implying that it is not possible or engaging to observe the various stages of change. Rather, I would argue that the process of that transformation is itself as—if not more—interesting than locating the lives of these people on some preconceived and static ladder of achievements. Furthermore, that transformation did not always point in a singular "forward" direction. Some emigrants came back to Mount Lebanon because they rejected "modernity" as defined by American middle-class society: either as an industrial and mechanical world or as a "nuclear" home.

Beyond these caveats, it seems to me that it is more rewarding to understand the tensions that were inherent in, and that gave rise to, this new class. These tensions derived from, and formed, the debate about society and culture in the Mountain. They occurred in various areas that collectively formed the identities of the *ahali* of that region.[2] As I have detailed in this work, emigration induced social tensions in issues of gender and family. Even before returning from the *mahjar,* emigrants—particularly those who went to the United States—had to confront the glaring inconsistencies in the roles ascribed to men and women. From a "traditional" perspective, women were supposed to stay home, away from strangers. Yet economic realities compelled many of them to join their husbands, fathers, brothers, and uncles on the streets and in small factories. Their labor was crucial for survival and for accumulating enough money to return "home." But it was also shameful because it sacrificed the "honor" of the family and underscored the inability of men to provide for their families. This shame was only highlighted by the glaring scrutiny to which middle-class America subjected these "foreigners" and their "peculiar" ways. Besieged in this way, peasant communities in Boston and Buenos Aires had to consciously articulate and defend their values, a process which constantly, conflictingly, and gradually altered the definition of women's role in society.

On one level, this process was articulated by women and men who published their thoughts on such matters in the new public arena of the newsprint medium. Articles and rebuttals filled the pages of newspapers published in Philadelphia, Rio de Janeiro, and Beirut. Some argued that women could and should do anything that a man did. Others maintained that the "natural" position of women was secondary to the one God ordained for men. In between were various shades and mélanges of these

opinions. Although there was no organized feminist movement to speak of before the end of World War I, these heated debates were a good measure of the winds of change that were buffeting emigrant communities and Mount Lebanon. Throughout, those who argued for greater opportunities for women did so in the name of progress and "modernity," both constituent and—supposedly—unique elements of the emerging middle class. This contention was only strengthened by concurrent European colonial attacks on the culture of the "Orient" as the antithesis of rational modernity.[3] Henceforth, anyone who wished to be middle class had to, at least, make a nod toward allowing women "modern" possibilities such as education and a role in upholding the morality of society.

While many of this new-born middle class held their ground on such subjects, many more compromised their position even if by small increments. No greater evidence exists than the burgeoning population of girls who attended schools in various and even remote parts of Mount Lebanon. Most parents provided their daughters with an education in order to improve their marriage possibilities and to follow the fashion of the times. Nonetheless, the result was that the Mountain could boast a larger percentage of educated young women than could any of the surrounding regions in the Ottoman Empire. From amidst this generation emerged new women thinkers who further challenged—and a few of whom supported—the status quo of middle-class life and its underlying new patriarchal contract, which sought to displace women into the private and isolated sphere of the house. These challenges, which only increased after the 1920s, allowed women to gain greater access to public life on an individual basis and in a few notable instances through organized political movements.

That entry was questioned every step of the way, and the debate never strayed far from women's supposed obligation to be the "goddesses" of the house. In that vein, we note a commentary by an accomplished Lebanese woman writer, Emily Faris Ibrahim. In the course of her biographical book on Lebanese women authors, Ibrahim quoted Hanna Kourani (1870–1898): "The woman in her ignorance assumes that her equality with the man is not achieved except if she does what he does. Moreover, the woman cannot [perform] an external task at the same time as performing her duties to serve her husband and children."[4] Ibrahim's commentary on that statement was simply to observe that, at the time Kourani was writing, neither the social organization nor the tools that would free women from domestic chores to engage in a job outside the home existed.[5] In other words, Ibrahim still assumed that it was the

woman's role within the middle-class family to nurture the children, to support the husband, and to manage the house; if there was time left over, then a woman was entitled to venture beyond the private realm of the house. Without harshly judging Ibrahim for her lenient assessment of Kourani's writing, we can still arrive at the conclusion that, after fifty years of debates on gender roles, women were still being torn between the "private" and "public" spheres.[6]

Intimately linked to these debates were the discussions about the shape of the family and the relations that lent form to that edifice. For emigrants, these negotiations began in the *mahjar* and continued in the Mountain. Separation from the clan and exposure to the American middle-class version of the "family" brought about discussions and changes—and also continuity—in how emigrants thought of, and constructed, families. Although emigrants in the United States formed familial associations in order to re-create the clan structures they had left behind, these could not possibly fulfill the same roles. Distance between families, a new and frenzied pace of work, and an itinerant life-style which regularly took peddlers in and out of the daily life of the community all made those associations a pale imitation of the patriarchal clan of the village. An annual picnic in a park in Flint, Michigan, was not quite the same as the constant presence of relatives within the close proximity of the village back in Lebanon. In other words, relative physical isolation made the boundaries of the individual family more distinct than ever before. In practical terms, wife and husband, parents and children had to lean on each other—emotionally as well as financially—much more than they were accustomed to before emigration. Without replacing other social networks (men sitting in coffeehouses and women visiting at each other's houses), the "nuclear" family began to tug more powerfully at the web of those relations. Wives expected husbands to stay home more often, and parents were expected to be more attentive to the needs and moral upbringing of their children.

Outside the transplanted community, the "nuclear" middle-class family was being proposed as the ideal of American social life. A working father, a house-bound mother, children who did not work except at their schooling, and dinner around the table every evening were elements of the framework of that family. This was the yardstick against which emigrant families were judged—mostly as lacking. Here, again, we find that emigrants who found such a model socially isolating and emotionally stunting had to defend their opinion. They were faced with the accusations that their way of living was archaic. While they may have scoffed at such absurdities, they still became engaged in a discussion of "East" and

"West," "progress" and "reaction," and other such one-dimensional, dichotomous labels.

Those who returned to the Mountain partially rejected this cultural mapping of their world. They consciously left "America"—the presumed bastion of progress—to return to their "traditional" world. Nonetheless, on returning to the Mountain, they constructed their own version of a "modern" family. They built large ornate houses that were less open to the village. On the inside the *harat* was subdivided into living and sleeping quarters, with the parents separated from their children, and visitors from the family. They purchased dining tables, chairs, and silverware, with which they hoped to impress their poorer neighbors and cousins. And while their oldest children may have worked, certainly the younger ones were dispatched to schools, where they were expected to learn their way past the fields and into a desk job. In other words, they were constructing their own version of the middle-class family they had seen in the *mahjar.* They did so because they could and because they wanted to. They could because they had accumulated enough money to afford a "modern" life-style. More important, they desired these material objects because they did not want to live and act as peasants. This desire was borne out of the need to give tangible meaning to their voyages and equally out of the fact that their lives in the *mahjar* had indeed changed them.

A decade or two later, the children of these returned emigrants took the process one step further. They left the village permanently to reside in the coastal towns and cities of Lebanon, away from their immediate relatives. Their social circles were no longer made up of just the extended family but of newfound friends who had similar interests and status within the larger community. Consequently, the village dimmed as a point of social reference for this generation. It was, for them, a place to visit occasionally and perhaps a place for spending the summer away from the heat of the cities but not a place where they lived for the greatest part of their adult years. These internal migrations had become so common by the 1970s that clan associations were being established in Lebanon so that individual families *could* stay in touch.[7] While this development hardly signals the demise of the extended family, it does point to a reduction in its influence and relevance to the daily life of individual families.

The constructs of both family and gender, then, underwent dramatic changes as a result of peasant emigration from the Mountain. In tracing these transformations from 1861 through 1920, I was repeatedly struck by what seemed to be a counterintuitive phenomenon. Every time the patriarchal contract appeared to be at a breaking point, women worked

to salvage it from absolute dissolution and to safeguard the entity of the family. When fathers sent their daughters to work in silk factories, the daughters passed on their earnings to assure the survival of the family. When emigrant men left their wives in the villages, the women persevered and struggled to rejoin their spouses and to reconstitute their families. And when men asked their wives to work as peddlers, the women did so for the sake of the family. In fact, at many junctions men were far quicker to relinquish their responsibility toward the family than were women. For example, in quite a few instances, men abandoned their wives or took mistresses in the *mahjar;* we hear of no such incidents—especially of the first kind—among women. Even though women could not but recognize the failures of their men at those moments, few abandoned the family in pursuit of their own individual interests. Social expectations, both past and present, account to some degree for this reluctance in leaving behind the institution of marriage. Another reason was the financial difficulty that women would have faced outside the boundaries of the family.

But if women did not abandon the family, they certainly sought changes in the nature of the relationships within the boundaries of the house. They worked hard to reconstitute the family in a manner that would provide them with more control over its collective destiny. Evidence for such alterations abounds. In one article published in *al-Huda,* ᶜAfifa Karam noted approvingly that "amongst civilized and objective [observers] a woman is seen as the equal to man, rather than being considered a servant to a master, or a child to a father or a slave to an owner."[8] More telling are the numerous complaints that were printed in newspapers and voiced in speeches by men who were unhappy about women's mounting authority. One such author voiced concern about women's work because it was disrupting the "natural" order of life. He wrote, "The woman was created to work within honorable circles [the house] and the man was created to manage society and state; . . . when [women work as peddlers] then the harmony of society will be disrupted and its morals will be endangered."[9] Elevation of the status of middle-class women from "house" to "goddess" of the house is yet another indication of the altered nature of power relationships within the family. While being relegated to the "private " sphere of the house was a move that created its own set of contradictions and inequality of power, it was nonetheless an improvement in the position of women. To attend a public ceremony with a husband, father, or brother was socially more empowering than being completely excluded from the social theater of

power and authority. To demand education for girls was an advancement over the compelled illiteracy of most peasant women. And if most used their education as a way into a better marriage, others employed it as a tool to critique and undermine the emerging cult of domesticity.

A central tenet of this book has been that the juxtaposition of gender and family as two antithetical identities is useless in grasping the history of any community. In fact, as the stories of emigrants from Mount Lebanon show, each subset of identities requires the other. Moreover, while a partial identity—say gender—may assume a central primacy at a particular moment in time and space, the relevance of that event cannot be generalized to imply a permanence which is not there. At a later time gender could very well recede into lesser importance as the survival of the family took precedence over individual concerns or needs. As we have seen from examples in this book, most women in the *mahjar* were willing to endure the weight of a *qashé* and the harsh winters of New York to ensure the survival of their families. Yet, many of them did that without refraining from complaining about the pains to which they had to go every day to put food on the table. Nor did they hesitate to voice their desires for a better life in which the work was divided more fairly. In other words, to separate the emotions and relations which made up family and gender is to splinter a life into pieces of a puzzle that are meaningless alone.

Lastly, as much as some men and women reacted similarly to their experiences as emigrants, others reacted differently. This diversity makes any undifferentiated notion of community problematic at best. Instead of imagining the variations to be merely exceptions, we must see them as elements integral to the history of the whole community. Without these parts, the whole is incomprehensible. In other words, we must accept the contingencies of any of our conclusions if we are to avoid the didactic pitfalls of theoretical constructs like "Dependency" and "modernization." Additionally, we must—as I have tried to do—go beyond the categories of "women" and "patriarchy" to allow for various histories that not only trace different paths but also create conflicts within the same supposedly cohesive gender. Only then can we hope to avoid the marginalization of women's history and elude constructing women as a stultified Other.[10]

Class is relevant to this project of complicating historical categories. When recounting the making of the "modern," most scholars focus on the locus of postindustrial "modernity": the middle classes. Although it is taken for granted that this social category is part of a class system that extends vertically in either direction, it is still treated for the most part

in isolation. Aside from depriving us of an understanding of the social history of the middle class, this isolation helps inadvertently to reinforce the dichotomy between "modern" and "traditional." However, as I have repeatedly noted in this work, peasant "traditions" were instrumental in the making of "modernity." For those who looked favorably on the making of the "modern" middle class, the peasant past provided the Other against which to elucidate the virtues of "modernity." And for those who considered the proposed cult of domesticity to be a prison of "modern" expectations, the memories of women working in the fields or *mahjar* were—subconsciously or otherwise—models of gender roles that belied the projected fragile "femininity" and the "house" as the natural location for women. In either case, "tradition" was integral to the making of the "modern" middle classes and for highlighting modernity's contradictions.[11]

. . .

The various life stories that we have followed in this book lead us to the inexorable conclusion that emigration was instrumental in determining how many Lebanese came to define themselves as "modern"—or not—in the twentieth century. Emigration was critical in this historical change at both a quantitative (objective) and a qualitative (subjective) level.

The quantitative element is the most straightforward in some ways. Unlike the case in surrounding regions—such as Iran, Egypt, and Turkey—where "modernity" was the preserve primarily of the elites and upper classes, in Mount Lebanon it was peasants for the greater part who engaged the processes of "modernity." At first, they did so in the *mahjar*, but on their return they continued the process within the Mountain. Since a third to a half of the rural population had emigrated to the Americas over the course of thirty years, it is fairly obvious that the return of many emigrants brought material and cultural influences that were felt more widely within Lebanon than in Egypt, for instance. In other words, villagers in Lebanon experienced the brands of "modernity" that emigrants brought back with them far earlier than the fellahin of Hama or Upper Egypt. In some cases this modernity was manifested in the proliferation of material stuff, while in other instances it was evident in greater access to education, which led young people away from peasant life into the ranks of a middle class of sorts.

But the role of emigration in the construction of a local "modernity" in Mount Lebanon was not just a matter of distinctive numbers. In addition, the experiences of emigrants with the forces of "modernity"—

particularly as articulated in the United States—were generally more intense. The emerging middle classes of Teheran and Istanbul were engaging the European version of "modernity" on their own terms. They struggled with many of the same forces and contradictions that emigrants dealt with. Yet, they were doing so at a physical distance that allowed them greater control over the construction of new cultural and social environments. Emigrants, however, were embroiled in hegemonic societies where they were a distinct minority in every sense of the word. Their ability to eschew entanglement in the project of "modernity" was far more circumscribed by their circumstances. This does not imply that they were powerless. Rather, they experienced a far more intense process of "modernity" than did those back in Beirut.

Because of emigration, then, the encounter with "modernity" was an accelerated, intense, and widespread experience for the peasants of Mount Lebanon. It was not just that the voyages into the land of the Other provoked a crisis of identity which necessitated a conscious investigation of the definition of self. Rather, and in addition, the encounters with other cultures and variegated historical circumstances shaped the answers to questions about the identity of the emigrant individual and the community. In matters of family, gender, and class, emigration made some accepted norms appear irrelevant at best, thus provoking a search for new and possibly more relevant ways of life. How far individuals or groups walked away from their past varied considerably, and not all walked in the same direction.

Regardless of the path they took, enough of those emigrants returned to Mount Lebanon to create a middle class that was distinctly separate from the rural peasantry and the urban bourgeoisie. Flush with financial success and cultural novelties, they had the wherewithal to be able to assume that they were the future of Mount Lebanon. In equal parts, they had the desire and felt the compulsion to define that future in terms of an indigenous "modern"—distinct in many real and historically meaningful ways from the definition of "modernity" that "America" was attempting to foist on them. The desire was borne of their need to give tangible meaning to their voyages, a meaning which could be seen and, they hoped, appreciated by those they had left behind. The compulsion was the outcome of their encounters with hegemonic cultures that subjected them to critical inquiry. These encounters propelled emigrants either to carve a place for themselves on a value-laden bridge spanning "modernity" and "tradition" or—as many more did—to reject that dichotomy through a blending of new and old ways (Turkish fez, French

jacket, and peasant *sirwal*) that meant something to them even when it did not fit a theoretical mold. The admirable heights and disappointing lows that they attained in making themselves into a middle class shaped a “modern” Lebanon replete with new possibilities and rich in contradictions. Emigration was critical to this mixed future.

Notes

1. A Departure from the Ordinary

1. Smithsonian Museum of American History, Alexa Naff Arab American Collection, Series 4-c-c, interview with Michel Haddy, 1962.

2. The three main works on emigration from Mount Lebanon to the Americas are Elie Safa, *L'Émigration libanaise* (Beirut: Université Saint Joseph, 1960); Alexa Naff, *Becoming American: The Early Arab Immigrant Experience* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1985); and most recently Albert Hourani and Nadim Shehadi, eds., *The Lebanese in the World: A Century of Emigration* (London: Centre for Lebanese Studies and Tauris, 1992).

3. *Mahjar* means "land of emigration." "Assimilation" of these emigrants into life in the United States is the focus of Naff's book *Becoming American*. Yet, that notion of simply abandoning who you are, leaving nary a trace of who you were on your "American" life, is not easily sustainable in the face of the cultural continuities so common among Lebanese Americans of that generation. This idea of assimilation has been attacked quite effectively by Robert E. Park and the Chicago sociologists in the 1920s and by Oscar Handlin, who dominated the field of immigration history in the 1940s and 1950s. In the 1960s and early 1970s scholars such as Rudolph Vecoli, Frank Thistlewaite, and Herbert G. Gutman, and later their students, continued to dismantle the mythology of the "melting pot." Naff's notion that the emigrants from Mount Lebanon slipped into the "mainstream" without a struggle is untenable in the face of all the arguments and discussions that took place in the Arab media and in other public venues of discourse. She fails to note the struggles by these emigrants to retain a distinct identity and the coercive elements which forced them ultimately to give up so much of their distinctiveness. Nonetheless, one must not deny the valuable contribution of Naff's book, particularly as it was one of the first to document the experiences of early Arab Americans.

4. Kumkum Sangari and Sudesh Vaid, eds., *Recasting Women: Essays in Indian Colonial History* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1990), 5.

5. See *Women in the Metropolis: Gender and Modernity in Weimar Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997)—a collection of essays edited by Katharina von Ankum—for examples of the ambivalence with which many "middle-class" Germans approached the notion of "being modern." On the one hand, such a state of being appeared as a sign of positive progress in life and universal history, particularly when juxtaposed with the "traditional" Other displayed in museum exhibits and written about in anthropological studies and magazine articles. On the other hand, this state of "modernity" brought along anxieties about the submersion of the individual within a mass culture that is progressively alienating.

6. A quick browse through the titles of monographs published in 1998 reveals at least one thousand containing the word *modernity* or *postmodernity.*

7. Paul Rabinow, *French Modern: Norms and Forms of the Social Environment* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1989), 9.

8. Clarissa Pollard, "Nurturing the Nation: The Family Politics of the 1919 Egyptian Revolution" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1997); Mona Russell, "Creating the New Woman: Consumerism, Education, and National Identity in Egypt, 1863–1922" (Ph.D. diss., Georgetown University, 1998); Beth Baron, *The Women's Awakening in Egypt: Culture, Society, and the Press* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1994); Margot Badran, *Feminists, Islam and Nation: Gender and the Making of Modern Egypt* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995); Afsaneh Najmabadi, *The Story of the Daughters of Quchan: Gender and National Memory in Iranian History* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1998). Also see a collection of essays on "modernity" edited by Lila Abu-Lughod, *Remaking Women: Feminism and Modernity in the Middle East* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1998).

9. Abu-Lughod, *Remaking Women,* 9.

10. Joan Wallach Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," in *Feminism and History,* ed. Joah Wallach Scott (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 156–157.

11. See Judith Tucker, "The Fullness of Affection: Mothering in the Islamic Law of Ottoman Syria and Palestine," in *Women in the Ottoman Empire: Middle Eastern Women in the Early Modern Era,* ed. Madeline C. Zilfi (New York: Brill, 1997), 232–252.

12. This formulation is part of some studies by European historians of the family. Within the work of Jack Goody, for instance, we find that the "Arab" family appears as a fixed extended family that does not change, and it is used to highlight the "significantly" different European nuclear family. Such juxtaposition is essential for the explanations that these historians employ for the rise of industrial capitalism in Europe and "nowhere else." While most American and European historians have long abandoned the assumption that the nuclear family gave rise to the Industrial Revolution, or vice versa for that matter, the notion still lingers that the "extended" family is the norm for the Middle East. This assumption is based mostly on the absence of any real and recent studies of the

history of the family in the area as well as on some early anthropological and ethnological work.

13. Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo, "The Uses and Abuses of Anthropology: Reflections on Feminism and Cross-Cultural Understanding," *Signs* 5 (1980): 400.

14. Michel Foucault, *Histoire de la sexualité* (Paris: Gallimard, 1994–1997), and Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972–1977* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980).

15. Qasim Amin was one of the leading bourgeois advocates of the "modernization" of elite women's roles in family, society, and nation. He wrote the book *Al-Marʾah al-Jadidah* (New woman) (Cairo: Sion, 1900) as an argument for changing gender roles and for providing women with greater educational opportunities that would better prepare them for those roles. I am borrowing the notion of "classic patriarchy" from Kandiyoti, who defines it as a system of gender roles based on unequal homosocial spheres, where women are subsumed within an extended family and where they do not exercise any direct control over resources and the decision-making process with regard to the world surrounding them. However, it must be added that within this system women had developed strategies that allowed them to maximize their control over the events surrounding them through informal—but nonetheless real and influential—means. Deniz Kandiyoti, "Islam and Patriarchy," in *Women in Middle Eastern History: Shifting Boundaries in Sex and Gender*, ed. Nikki Keddie and Beth Baron (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1991), 34.

16. See, for example, Marilyn Booth's "The Egyptian Lives of Jeanne D'Arc," in *Remaking Women: Feminism and Modernity in the Middle East,* ed. Lila Abu-Lughod (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1998).

17. Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category," 167.

18. I borrow this notion from Foucault, who wrote, "The purpose of history, guided by genealogy, is not to discover the roots of our identity but to commit itself to its dissipation." Michel Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews,* ed. Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1977), 162.

19. "Bound by distance" is the title of a most interesting reading of the history of Southern Italian emigration: Pasquale Verdicchio, *Bound by Distance: Rethinking Nationalism through the Italian Diaspora* (Madison, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1997).

20. Among the most famous of such travelers in the Middle East is Rifaʿa al-Tahtawi (1801–1873), who was sent by Muhammad ʿAli, the governor of Egypt, on an educational mission to Paris. The observations of Paris and its people that he provided allowed his readers to encounter another culture on their own terms. Such an encounter was part of the process through which the middle classes began to express their consciousness of themselves vis-à-vis the "modern" world.

21. Another important axis was sectarianism. Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, affiliation with a religious sect came to play an increasingly important role in the identity of individuals and community. Thus, while being Druze or Maronite was mildly relevant to the daily lives of peasants in Lebanon during the eighteenth century, such identification took on heightened importance between 1800 and 1860 as a result of the confluence of Ottoman reforms, European

colonial expansionism, and the political interests of local elites. As Makdisi makes poignantly clear in his writing on this subject, "sectarianism" was elevated to its paramount status by the European and Ottoman narratives which needed a timeless and "backward" identity to juxtapose with the supposed progressivism of a "modernity" in the making; Ussama Makdisi, *The Culture of Sectarianism: Community, History, and Violence in Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Lebanon* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000). After the civil war of 1860 this juxtaposition continued to exist and was manipulated by Maronite thinkers who were intent on distancing themselves evermore from the other religious communities by drawing a sharp and ahistorical boundary between themselves and the "Others." Thus they embraced "modernity" as that distinguishing characteristic. In the *mahjar* this constructed identity was elaborated even further by the writing of narratives of emigration which located the reasons for the movement of peasants in the oppression of the "Turk," an archetype of "backwardness" and "barbarism"—ostensibly everything that the "West" was not. Furthermore, "modernity," as it was being constructed in the *mahjar* and later in Lebanon on the return of the emigrants, was given a sectarian inflection which was meant only to perpetuate the mythology of distinctiveness between "Christian" and "Muslim" in Lebanon. Despite the intriguing and potentially illuminating aspect of this axis of study, I will regrettably not undertake it here because I wish to focus on gender and family.

22. Donna Gabaccia, "Liberty, Coercion and the Making of Immigration Historians," *Journal of American History* 84, no. 2 (September 1997): 570–575.

23. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer* (Duffield: Chatto & Windus, 1908 [1782]), 43. This theme was taken up by many writers after de Crèvecoeur. For example, John Quincy Adams wrote in 1819 that immigrants "must cast off the European skin, never to resume it." Quoted in Moses Rischin, ed., *Immigration and the American Tradition* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1976), 47. Zangwill went further and invoked divine providence when he had his protagonist, David, exclaim in *The Melting Pot,* "America is God's Crucible, the great Melting-Pot where all the races of Europe are melting and reforming! . . . God is making the American." Israel Zangwill, *The Melting Pot: A Drama in Four Parts* (New York: Macmillan, 1909), 33.

24. Arthur Schlesinger Jr., *The Disuniting of America: Reflections on a Multicultural Society* (New York: Norton, 1992), 13.

25. I have placed the term *diaspora* in quotes because I find it problematic. While many of those who write of "diasporas" argue that they are doing so because they seek to challenge isolated national histories, the term itself belies that attempt. It does so because it assumes a point of departure where culture is located and to which people must return if they are to retain that heritage. In other words, it localizes culture in a specific geographical area, thus allowing for an "organic" specificity that very much fits nationalist discourse. I have arrived at this conclusion after an illuminating lunch with my colleague David Gilmartin, who organized a conference on this topic as it pertains to South Asia.

26. Paul Carter, *Living in a New Country: History, Traveling and Language* (London: Faber & Faber, 1992), 7–8. Similar sentiments have been written in various essays and books such as Edward Said's "Reflections on Exile," in *Out There Marginalization and Contemporary Cultures,* ed. Russell Ferguson, Martha

Gever, Trinh T. Minh-ha, and Cornel West (New York: New Museum of Contemporary Art; Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1990). See also Ian Chambers, *Migrancy, Culture and Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1993); Stuart Hall, "Minimal Selves," in *Identity, the Real Me. Post-Modernism and the Question of Identity,* ed. Lisa Appignanesi (London: ICA Documents, 1989).

27. Among the latest are several articles by Ewa Morawska, one of which was entitled "Return Migrations: Theoretical and Research Agendas," in *A Century of European Migrations, 1830–1930,* ed. Rudolph Vecoli and Suzanne M. Sinke (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991).

28. Donna Gabaccia, *Militants and Migrants: Rural Sicilians Become American Workers* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1988); Dino Cinel, *The National Integration of Italian Return Migration, 1870–1929* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991). See also Katy Gardner, *Global Migrants, Local Lives: Travel and Transformation in Rural Bangladesh* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

29. Gabaccia, "Liberty, Coercion and the Making of Immigration Historians," 574. What is also striking in most immigration studies is their focus on European immigrants, when in fact there were many who came from Asia.

30. Gary Grestle, "Liberty, Coercion, and the Making of Americans," *Journal of American History* 84, no. 2 (September 1997): 538–539. Of course, one cannot dismiss the focus on those who stayed out of hand; their stories are integral to the story of the United States. Yet, as some immigration historians have begun to argue, this history cannot be complete until it includes the stories of those who left alongside the stories of those who stayed. The numbers alone (ranging from 25 to 60 percent return migration) should compel us to question why these people left and to ponder how they saw "America."

31. For some samples of these numbers, see Gabaccia, *Militants and Migrants,* 177–179. For Finland you can refer to Reino Kero, "The Return of Emigrants from America to Finland," in University of Turku Institute of General History, *Publications* (Uppsala, 1972), 11–13. And some German statistics for the pre-1880 era can be found in Walter D. Kamphoefner, "The Volume and Composition of German-American Return Migration," in *A Century of European Migrations, 1830–1930,* ed. Rudolph Vecoli and Suzanne M. Sinke (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991), 296–299.

32. Kohei Hashimoto, "Lebanese Population Movement, 1920–1939: Towards a Study," in *The Lebanese in the World: A Century of Emigration,* ed. Albert Hourani and Nadim Shehadi (London: Centre for Lebanese Studies and Tauris, 1992), 65.

33. The idea of the "nation" as developed in the *mahjar* is a research subject that is very much in need of being pursued. Studies of Arab nationalism which focus solely on events and ideological currents in Syria, Lebanon, and the Ottoman Empire provide only a part of the picture because many of the nationalist debates took place in Brazil, Argentina, and the United States. There, the emigrant community was confronted with an identity connected to the mythical structure of the nation, a kind of identity they had not encountered before. This encounter obliged some of them to start defining a countervailing national identity. For example, Antoun Saᶜadeh lived in Brazil for a prolonged

period of time. There he began to formulate his thoughts on "Greater Syria," carrying on the work of a group of intellectuals who had preceded him and who lived in Paris. Pierre Gemayel, the head of the right-wing nationalist party, al-Kataʾeb, was himself a product of the community of Lebanese who resided in Egypt.

34. James Clifford, "Traveling Cultures," in *Cultural Studies,* ed. Lawrence Grossberg, Cary Nelson, and Paula Treichler (New York: Routledge, 1992), 101.

35. Various Maronite historians have located that origin in different epochs and peoples. Early historians claimed that the "original Lebanese" were the *marada,* a "warlike" tribe that occupied the northern parts of Mount Lebanon. Later, more nuanced histories displace the *marada* as predecessors of the "History of Lebanon" and replace them with Maronites, who were allied with the *marada* in their opposition to "Arabs." In all these cases, the end result remains the same: the Maronites were "different" from Arabs. This argument takes on a "modernity" twist with Paul Njeim, who in 1908, under the pseudonym Paul Jouplain, wrote a tract entitled *La Question du Liban; etude d'histoire diplomatique & de droit international* (Paris: Rousseau, 1908; reprint, Beirut: al-Ahliyah lil-Nashr wa-al-Tawzīᶜ, 1995). He appealed to the French "nation" to recognize Lebanon as separate from the "East" and as belonging spiritually and intellectually to the "West." This myth has become an elemental part of the current Maronite identity and continues to surface—albeit much less frequently—in scholarly conferences and debates. For a superb study of Lebanese historians, see Ahmad Beydoun's *Le Liban: Une histoire disputée—identité et temps dans l'historiographie libanaise contemporaine* (Beirut: Publications de l'Université Libanaise, 1984). Also refer to Kamal Salibi's *A House of Many Mansions: The History of Lebanon Reconsidered* (Berkeley: University of California Press, and London: Tauris, 1988).

36. Among the writers who contributed to this mythology were Lahad Khatir, *Al-ᶜAdāt wal taqālid al-lubnaniyya* (Beirut: Lahad Khater, 1977), and Anis Furayhah, *Hadara fi tarīq al-zawāl: al-Qarya al-lubnaniyya* (Beirut: n.p., 1957). The extremist views of later political groups like the Guardians of the Cedar, the Marada, and the Lebanese Forces owe much of their ideological fuel to interpretations of these exclusionist histories.

37. Most notable among the contemporary historians who have written about this period are I. ᶜAqiqi and Mikhail Mishaqa. By the 1950s local and foreign historians like the following wrote extensively on the subject of the 1860 peasant revolt in the Mountain: Asad Rustum, *Lubnan fi ᶜahd al-Mutasarrifiyya* (Beirut: Publications de l'Université Libanaise, 1954); Yehoshua Porath, "The Peasant Revolt of 1858–61 in Kisrawan," *Asian and African Studies* (Jerusalem) 2 (1966): 37–78; Irina Smilianskaya, *Al-Harakat al-fallahiyya fi Lubnan: al-Nisf al-awal mina al-qarn al-tasiᶜ ᶜashar,* tr. Adnan Jamous (Beirut: al-Farabi, 1978); Abdallah Hanna, *al-Qadiyya al-ziraᶜiyyā wa al-harakat al-fallahīyya fi Suriyya wa Lubnan (1820–1920)* (Beirut: al-Farabi, 1975). The latest in these histories is Leila Tarazi Fawaz's *An Occasion for War: Civil Conflict in Lebanon and Damascus in 1860* (Berkeley: University of California Press, and London: Centre for Lebanese Studies and Tauris, 1994).

38. Samir Khalaf wrote of this problem in his book *Persistence and Change in 19th Century Lebanon* (Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1979).

39. Jacqueline des Villettes, *La Vie des femmes dans un village Maronite libanais: ᶜAyn el-Kharoubé* (Tunis: N. Bascone & S. Muscat, 1964).

40. See Khatir, *Al-ᶜAdāt wal taqālid al-lubnaniyya,* and Furayha, *Hadara fi tarīq al-zawāl,* for a sampling of this romanticized view of the woman as her husband's helper.

41. Boutros Labaki, *La Soie dans l'economie du Mont Liban et dans son environnement arabe (1840-1914)* (Beirut: Publications de l'Université Libanaise, 1979).

42. Hall, "Minimal Selves," 44.

2. Factory Girls

1. AE CC, Correspondance commerciale, Beyrouth, 1864–1867, vol. 7.

2. I am using this term here in the sense that Max Weber employs it to differentiate between social and economic classes. In this context, strata is defined as a social position that one inherits through birth and whose rituals of power are presented as ideologically distinct from economic roots even when they are—in reality—tied to them. Economic classes, in contrast, are much more clearly defined by money, or lack thereof. Obviously, there are limitations to this idealized division, but it still helps us understand the relative shift from strata to class as the source of sociopolitical power within the Mountain and, later, Lebanon. Moreover, it makes "clear that a class situation, defined as a set of shared interest of groups of individuals, is many-layered and totally unequivocal only in the exceptional case." Wolfgang J. Mommsen, *The Political and Social Theory of Max Weber, Collected Essays* (Cambridge: Polity, 1989), 63.

3. *Mashayikh* is another term for *shuyukh.*

4. Nasif Yaziji, *Risala tarikhiyya* (Beirut: n.p., 1869), 16.

5. This remark was made by Edmond Portalis in a report to the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Paris. AE CC, Correspondance commerciale, Beyrouth, vol. 9, dispatch no. 72, February 22, 1868.

6. Some of the historians who have recorded this history are Boutros Labaki and Dominique Chevallier. More recently, Kais firro published an article entitled "Silk and Agrarian Changes in Lebanon, 1860–1914," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 22 (February 1990): 151–169. Also see Akram Khater, "She Married Silk: A Rewriting of Peasant History in 19th Century Mount Lebanon" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1993).

7. David Urquhart, *The Lebanon* (*Mount Souria*): *A History and a Diary* (London: Thomas Coutley Newby, 1860), 1: 390.

8. This percentage is an approximation that was arrived at in the following manner. In the second half of the eighteenth century, taxes were collected in Mount Lebanon in cash or in kind on cultivated land and male adults. Each mulberry tree in the Mountain was taxed at the rate of 1/40 of a piaster. Volney quotes a figure of 3/40 piasters per tree. C. F. Volney, *Voyage en Égypte et en Syrie* (Paris: Librairie Parmantier, 1825), 1: 413. However, Souad Abou Slim el-Rousse convincingly argues, in her book *Le Métayage et l'impôt au Mont Liban, XVIIIe et XIXe siècles* (Beirut: el-Machreq, 1987), that Volney was in fact recording the total

amount of three tax collections which took place in times of governmental fiscal crisis. This was the case during the mid-1780s, when Volney was visiting the Mountain and when Ahmad al-Jazzar was tightly squeezing the rulers of that area for all their worth. During the 1780s, when about 1.6 million trees covered eighteen hundred hectares, the total tax extracted on mulberry trees amounted to 40,000 piasters. Taking the 1790s as a whole, we find the average tribute demanded by al-Jazzar and the pasha of Tripoli amounted to 600,000 piasters. With the "extras" required by the *shuyukh,* we can estimate that the peasantry had to supply close to 900,000 piasters in just one year. During that same period, tax collection was carried out about three times, which meant that the total contribution of the mulberry trees came to 120,000 piasters, or only 13.3 percent of the total fiscal requirements.

9. In 1824 the French consul general in Aleppo reported that 700 quintaux (70,000 kilograms) of spun silk were produced in the Mountain. Since it took—on average—14 kilograms of cocoons to make one kilogram of thread, we can estimate that some 980,000 kilograms of silk cocoons were harvested in the Mountain. While the yield of silkworm eggs varied yearly, on average 20 grams produced about 35 kilograms of silk cocoons, which meant that about 560,000 grams of eggs were hatched each year. As it took about 1,200 mulberry trees to feed 200 grams of silkworm eggs, we can conclude with reasonable certainty that Mount Lebanon had in 1824 about 3,360,000 trees planted. In acreage, each mulberry tree covered an area close to 11.25 square meters. Mulberry trees planted in Mount Lebanon around 1824 covered, then, a total of 3,783 hectares, or less than 10 percent of cultivated land. Finally, as the production of silk cocoons hovered around the 1,000,000-kilogram mark throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, we can conclude that not many more mulberry trees were planted during that period.

10. Boutros Labaki, "La Filature de la soie dans le sandjak du Mont-Liban: Une expérience de croissance industrielle dépendante (1840–1914)," in *Economie et sociétés dans l'empire Ottomane: fin du XVIIIéme* (Paris: C.N.R.S., 1983), 126.

11. Ibid.

12. Dominique Chevallier, *La Société du Mont Liban à l'époque de la révolution industrielle en Europe* (Paris: Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner, 1971), 196, 226.

13. Roger Owen, *The Middle East in the World Economy 1800–1914* (New York: Methuen, 1981), 161.

14. Gaston Ducousso, *L'Industrie de la soie en Syrie* (Paris: A. Challemel, 1913); AE CC, Correspondance commerciale, Beyrouth, vol. 10, 1890.

15. Labaki, *La Soie dans l'économie du Mont Liban,* 129.

16. See Jacques Weulersse, *Paysans de Syrie et du Proche Orient* (Paris: Gallimard, 1946); André Latron, *La Vie rurale en Syrie et Liban* (Beirut: L'Institut Français de Damas, 1936); Mūnzer Jaber's study of the Shi[c]ite peasantry in Jabal [c]Amil, "Pouvoir et société au Jabal [c]Amil de 1749 à 1920" (Ph.D. diss., University of Paris IV, 1978); [c]Ali Qasim al-Barji, *Riyaq: al-Sulta wal-qarā ba wal-ta[c]ifa* (Beirut: Lebanese University, 1986).

17. For example, Bernard des Essards, the French consul general in 1866, reported saying to Maronite Bishop Tobias, who was paying him a visit, "J'avais été indignés que le gouvernement de l'Empereur, que la France, qui ont tout fait

pour le Liban et pour les Maronites en particulier, avaient le droit de compter su leur soumission, sur le dévouement dont il parlent si souvent et que leur action démendent dans toutes les circonstances graves." AE CC, Correspondance commerciale, Beyrouth, vol. 8, dispatch no. 35, January 3, 1866.

18. Maronite clergy made regular visits to the consuls of France asking for help. After meeting with Archdeacon Hajj and Father Ni^{c}amatallah, the French consul general Bernard des Essard informed the Maronite church that France was tired of having to help them when they did not conform to its wishes. (AE CC, Correspondance commerciale, Beyrouth, vol. 8, dispatch no. 2, March 28, 1865). In 1908 Monsignor Emmanuel Pharès published a book in Lille, France, entitled *Les Maronites du Liban;* its main thrust was an appeal to French Catholics to help the Lebanese by providing donations.

19. Slim el-Rousse, *Le Métayage et l'impôt au Mont Liban;* in particular, see the chapter on taxation during the first half of the nineteenth century.

20. Iskandar ^{c}Issa Ma^{c}alouf, "Zajaliyya," *al-Mashriq,* no. 18 (1920): 240.

21. "Customary" behavior would have been that which the peasants perceived as, at least, acceptable. This same notion was referred to, in 1858, by the rebellious Maronite peasantry in their petition to the patriarch of the Maronite church. In it they complained that the Khazin *shuyukh* were "not behaving in the proper manner of their fathers," and they demanded a return to the "old customs." Malcolm Kerr, *Lebanon in the Last Years of Feudalism, 1840–1860* (Beirut: American University of Beirut Press, 1959), 98.

22. Contrary to the assumption by many scholars, peasants used revolt as only the last resort in their struggle against landlords. Revolt, for the peasant, was a most dangerous act that disrupted agriculture, depleted limited resources, and could easily lead to dispossession of what little he or she might have, and even to death. Much more common methods of resistance included, among many others, hiding some of the crop at collection time, refusing to provide information about who owned what plot of land, and temporarily disappearing into the hills. For an excellent critique of peasant studies that concentrate on revolts, as well as the more common forms of resistance, see James C. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1976).

23. Hanna, *al-Qadiyya al-zira^{c}iyya wa al-harakat al-fallahiyya fi Suriyya wa Lubnan*.

24. See, among others, Porath, "The Peasant Revolt of 1858–1861 in Kisrawan"; Owen, *The Middle East in the World Economy;* Dominique Chevallier, "Aux origines des troubles agraires libanais," *Annales* 14 (1959): 35–64; Hanna, *al-Qadiyya al-zira^{c}iyya wa al-harakat al-fallahiyya fi Suriyya wa Lubnan;* Smilianskaya, *Al-Harakat al-fallahiyya fi Lubnan*. Also see Fawaz, *An Occasion for War.* However, by far the best treatment of this subject is Ussama Makdisi, *The Culture of Sectarianism: Community, History, and Violence in Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Lebanon* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

25. *Mugharassa* translates literally as "co-planting." Under such a contract, a peasant would terrace and plant a particular plot of land with mulberry trees and tend it for about eight years, at which time the trees finally matured. In the meantime, the peasant was allowed to plant around the trees crops for his use as

long as they did not harm the development of the trees. The landlord would supply all the necessary equipment and seeds for the planting process. When the trees matured, the peasant would own one quarter of the land while the landlord would acquire the other three quarters.

26. An earlier attempt at setting up a silk factory was made by two adventurous souls in search of recapturing their lost wealth "in the Orient." Unfortunately for them they located their factory near the city of Beirut. Soon afterward they were embroiled in a legal battle over the use of water. In reality the struggle was due to the sensitivity of the Muslim inhabitants of Beirut to the European presence in their midst and to the "spoilations," as the Europeans' commercial gains were regarded. In a matter of two years the filature had to declare bankruptcy. ACG, Beyrouth, carton 32, 1832–1843; AE CC, Correspondance commerciale, Beyrouth, vol. 4, p. 355, 1839–1840, and vol. 5, p. 341, 1841–1842.

27. Saint-Étienne, the biggest silk-manufacturing town in France, owed its growth in large part to the existence of coal mines close enough to supply cheap fuel for its manufactories.

28. From correspondence with the French consul general in Beirut, we can assess the extent of this share. In a letter addressed to the French consul general in 1845, Nicolas Portalis demanded indemnity payments for cocoons that were burned and destroyed during the troubles that took place during that year. These cocoons had been purchased by the Portalis company and were valued at 130,865 piasters. In another letter penned the same year, Portalis requested 156,285 piasters in indemnities for cereal, wheat, barley, rice, and soap supplies that were pillaged from its stores in Btater. These supplies were to be used in bartering for silk cocoons to supply the factory. In total, the Portalis establishment was consuming annually at least 287,150 piasters worth of silk by their second year of operation, or about thirty thousand kilograms of silk cocoons. ACG, Beyrouth, carton 36, 1845.

29. Public Record Office (PRO), FO 78/456, dispatch from Rose to Palmerston, Beirut, September 16, 1841.

30. Chevallier lists these as Henri Paullat et Cie, Antoine Ferrier and Joseph Bérard, and Flavien de Michaux; *La Société du Mont Liban,* 217.

31. Ministerial investigation recorded in ACG, Beyrouth, carton 45, 1851, file entitled "Particuliers" and a report by Villaret de Joyeuse.

32. Boutros Labaki, *Introduction à l'histoire économique du Liban: Soie et commerce extérieur en fin de période Ottomane, 1840–1914* (Beirut: Lebanese University Press, 1984), 126. This difference applied mostly toward the end of 1870s. At the beginning of the century, French silk workers worked much longer hours, sometimes from 6 A.M. until 7 P.M. In fact one of the demands in the 1869 strike in Pélussin was a reduction of the working hours to eleven. Bernard Plessy and Louis Challet, *La Vie quotidienne des canuts, passementiers et moulinières au XIXe siècle* (Paris: Hachette, 1987), 74.

33. French workers were employed on a full-year basis, averaging 300 workdays; so fourteen thousand employees would have earned about 8.5 million francs. In comparison, fourteen thousand employees in Mount Lebanon worked about nine months of the year, averaging 220 workdays at 1.4 piasters per day; their collective wages were thus 431,200 piasters.

34. See Justin Godart's unsympathetic account of these events in his book *L'Ouvrier en soie, monographie du tisseur lyonnais: Étude historique, économique et sociale* (Geneva: Slatkine, Megariotis Reprints, 1976 [1899]), ch. 12.

35. Plessy and Challet, *La Vie quotidienne des canuts, passementiers et moulinières,* 73–74.

36. ACG, Beyrouth, carton 26, 1840, letter from Nicolas Portalis to the French consul general.

37. Boutros Labaki, "La Soie dans l'économie du Mont Liban et de son environnement arabe (1840–1914)," *Peuples Mediterranéens—Mediterranean Peoples* (France) 7 (1979): 127.

38. Plessy and Challet, *La Vie quotidienne des canuts, passementiers et moulinières,* 45–46.

39. ACG, Beyrouth, carton 36, 1845, "autorités françaises" file.

40. AE CC, Correspondance commerciale, Beyrouth, vol. 9, July 10, 1868.

41. AE CC, Correspondance commerciale, Beyrouth, vol. 7, dispatch no. 12, November 7, 1854. This dispatch outlined all the expenses related to shipping silk from the port of Beirut to the factories in Lyon. The cost of one kilogram of silk spun in France was derived from adding the costs of silk cocoons necessary for reeling the silk, which was 39 francs, another 8.25 francs to cover the costs of reeling, interest on the capital investment of about 3 francs, and a profit margin of 6.75 francs and above. Added up, these figures come to 57 francs. Another confirmation of the lower prices of silk spun outside France is to be found in the several pleas by the association of French reelers to the French government to raise the tariffs on imported silk. Only the opposition of the French weaving industry, which employed three hundred thousand workers and generated 700 million francs worth of business, kept the French parliament from enacting the demanded projectionist measures. Isma^c^il Haqqi, *Lubnan: Mabahith ^c^ilmiyya wa ijtimā^c^iyya wa siyāsīyya* (Ba^c^abda: al-Matba^c^ al-^c^Uthmaniya, 1913), 2: 519.

42. AE CC, Correspondance commerciale, Beyrouth, vol. 9, October 23, 1883.

43. In 1850 an average *oka* of silk was sold for 150 piasters, while the taxes imposed on it did not exceed 15.5 piasters. In a letter to the French consul general, the French trading houses demanded that the customs they paid on exported cocoons be calculated ad valorem to make them equal to the customs paid by French factory owners in the Mountain. AE CC, Correspondance commerciale, Beyrouth, vol. 7, dispatch no. 12, November 7, 1854. A local merchant complained to Urquhart that the customs which they had to pay for exporting their silk to Damascus were larger than those paid by European merchants. Urquhart, *The Lebanon,* 2: 136.

44. Quoted in John P. Spagnolo, *France* and *Ottoman Lebanon: 1861–1914* (London: Ithaca Press, 1977), 42.

45. Dominique Chevallier, *Villes et travail en Syrie du XIXe au XXe siècle* (Paris: Éditions F. P. Maisonneuve et Larousse, 1982), 46, cf. 2.

46. In 1887, one observer commented, "A great number of the filatures in Lebanon, . . . while managed by locals, are financed by French merchants from Lyons and Marseilles." AE CC, Correspondance commerciale, Beyrouth, vol. 10, trade report for the year 1887.

47. AE CC, Correspondance commerciale, Beyrouth, vol. 10, report entitled "Notes sur le commerce de la Syrie," June 1890.

48. Ducousso, *L'Industrie de la soie en Syrie,* 173.

49. AE CC, Correspondance commerciale, Beyrouth, vol. 7, dispatch no. 15, August 27, 1862.

50. Ducousso, *L'Industrie de la soie en Syrie,* 173. Shortly after this pinnacle, silk factories in the Mountain began an irreversible retreat. Competition from Japanese producers, who were manufacturing superior thread in far more advanced and mechanized factories, as well as the introduction of synthetic textiles sounded the death knell for the small factories of Lebanon. Although the demise of the silk industry was not abrupt, it was quick enough that for all intents and purposes sericulture had ceased to be of any economic value in the Mountain by World War I.

51. For a Lebanese peasant time was never made up of concrete and invariable blocks that could be measured and controlled in a linear progression from past to future. Such a concept would seem presumptuous in its attempt to forecast the future and alien in its abstraction of time from the physical and emotional experiences that make up the passage of life. Instead, time was seen as cyclical, tied closely to the variation of seasons, agricultural work, and crops. Each block of time was associated with subjective experiences that were not necessarily equal in duration nor uniform in nature. Rather than being linked in a linear continuum, these experiences were seen as independent units that did not require other points of reference in time. In other words, the organization of events in sequential order was not necessarily done according to which came first in time but according to the purpose behind the intended structure.

52. Ducousso, *L'Industrie de la soie en Syrie,* 153.

53. Complaints about the scarcity of manual laborers were continuously and irritably noted by French observers, even as late as the 1890s. See, for example, AE CC, Correspondance commerciale, Beyrouth, vol. 10, "Situation de l'industrie et du commerce de Beyrouth en 1892."

54. Ownership of land is a difficult matter to assess with any accuracy for Lebanon. The accepted wisdom among most historians of Lebanon is that the large majority of peasants owned some plot of land. However, this categorical assumption is rather too simplistic. Landownership, until 1861, was very much concentrated in the hands of *shuyukh* and the monasteries and convents of the Maronite church; the church had accumulated most of its landed wealth by the end of the eighteenth century. For an excellent study of this process refer to Richard van Leeuwen's book *Notables and Clergy in Mount Lebanon: The Khazin Sheikhs and the Maronite Church, 1736–1840* (New York: Brill), 1994. Only after 1860, when many Christian peasants received indemnities in the aftermath of the civil war did they began to acquire land. Furthermore, the boom in sericulture and the need to increase arable land increased the popularity of the *mugharassa* contract, which gave peasants a fifth to a fourth of the land they reclaimed from *mawat* areas. According to Petkovich, only 10 percent of the population of Mount Lebanon did not own land in 1879. Constantin Petkovich, *Lubnan wal-Lubnaniyun,* tr. Yusuf ᶜAtallah (Beirut: al-Mada, 1986 [1885]). Despite this estimate—and it is not clear where it came from—we still are left with little

knowledge about the average size of plots that most peasants owned in the Mountain. That piece of information is crucial for understanding the true socioeconomic meaning of the land to the peasants. (I discuss this matter in much greater detail in my dissertation: Khater, "She Married Silk.")

55. ACG, Beyrouth, carton 45, 1851.

56. Ibid. The 1 piaster per day that a Lebanese woman worker earned in a silk factory was also much lower than the wages earned by a French silk spinner, which amounted to 4 piasters.

57. To speak of a patriarchal structure in general would be a truism that does little to illuminate gender relations before 1860 in Mount Lebanon, particularly because change in these relations varied according to class and time. However, there is no doubt that in general women occupied a lower rung in the social order than men. In social matters this discrepancy was manifested in various customs. For example, Christian women prayed at the back of the church with the men in front; women ate after men finished their meals; women were not supposed to speak in the presence of men. From birth—when the arrival of a baby girl was received with the comment "The house's doorstep will be in mourning for forty days" (Furayha, *Hadara fi tarīq al-zawāl,* 181)—until death—when a man waited no longer than forty days to remarry while a widow rarely if ever remarried (Michel Feghali, "Mœurs et usages au Liban, la mort et funérailles," *Anthropos* 4 (1909): 43)—women were consciously relegated to an inferior position in daily life. Linguistically, a woman's name was rarely uttered, and when it had to be, it was accompanied by the term *ajallak,* or excuse the bad expression.

58. As Tannous points out for the village of Bishmizeen, filatures were started as "kinship group enterprises." Members of the larger kinship group were proud of the factory owned by one of their compound units and were always eager to see it become successful. They also were willing to help the owners in time of need. However, it was understood in the community that owners of the factory were expected to give employment preference to the members of their kinship group. Afif Tannous, "Social Change in an Arab Village," *American Sociological Review* 6 (1941): 655.

59. Ibid.

60. The sheer number of women workers—twelve thousand by 1880—makes it obvious that the factory owner had to resort to women outside the family.

61. In a typical Lebanese silk factory, there were about ninety women workers, five male overseers, and three "errand-boys." For a description of such a factory and the work process, see Haqqi, *Lubnan,* 2: 491–503.

62. These figure were calculated as follows. The total population around 1880 was about 300,000; slightly less than half—or 150,000—was female. Of the total female population, 15–25-year-olds constituted approximately 35 percent, or 52,500. Therefore, 12,000 female workers represented 22.8 percent of that population. Moreover, assuming an average size of six per family, we can estimate that there were about 50,000 families in Mount Lebanon. Out of these—and again estimating an average—12,000 supplied one young woman to the silk factories.

63. Urquhart, *The Lebanon,* 1: 390. In 1848 Urquhart estimated the income of a middling peasant family as being about 1,575 piasters per annum. He derived

this figure from resources that included two hundred mulberry trees, "which produce silk worth 500 piasters; and a vineyard of two hundred vine-stocks, which gives as much more." Extrapolating from his other comments, we can see that those families who were poorer did not bring in more than 1,000 piasters every year. The wages for a young female worker are calculated at 1 piaster per day and an average nine months' stint at a factory.

64. John Davis, *People of the Mediterranean: An Essay in Comparative Social Anthropology* (London: Routledge, 1977), 101.

65. Ibid., 90.

66. Similarly, in Egypt and Syria peasant women went about their daily lives with only a head cover because work with a veil was not practical and because it was much more crucial to men to have women labor in the fields than to veil and cloister them at home. However, the elite Circassian women of Cairo wore veils and lived in closed harem houses. It was strictly required of them to do so to show that their husbands were wealthy enough not to require their physical labor, and—as a corollary—among the upper classes women's bodies were their main commodity and as such had to be safeguarded in order to keep their value intact.

67. Tannous recounts an incident in which a young man had sexual intercourse with a woman in Bishmizeen. "The young man's family had to submit to the *mores* [my emphasis] of the group—have their son marry the girl and cover up the scandal." However, a village leader who was opposed to the girl's family convinced the young man to emigrate to Argentina. Afif Tannous, "Trends of Social and Cultural Change in a Lebanese Village: Bishmizeen" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1939), 216. Although we have little else in the way of evidence about the frequency and consequences of extramarital sex in Mount Lebanon, in comparatively similar areas—Vila Velha in southern Portugal and Pisticci in southern Italy—we find current examples of wives of peasants, those of "inferior" honor, copulating with their "honor superiors" in exchange for money and without further detracting from their families' honor. Davis, *People of the Mediterranean,* 92.

68. Tannous, "Social Change in an Arab Village," 656.

69. Maurice Chehab, *Dawr Lubnan fi tarikh al-harīr* (Beirut: Publications de l'Université Libanaise, 1967), 48–49.

70. Ibid., 57.

71. AE CC, Correspondance commerciale, Beyrouth, vol. 9, June 14, 1866.

72. Since most Lebanese-owned silk factories were—at least in the beginning—a family operation which required the financial support of the extended kinship group, members of that lineage naturally expected to be given preference in employment. As the factory prospered and the financial status of the extended family improved, the members of the lineage came to deem factory work beneath them, and the owners of the factory looked to neighboring villages when hiring female spinners. Tannous describes this process inBishmizeen. Tannous, "Trends of Social and Cultural Change," 156.

73. Spinning silk thread with fairly "primitive" machinery meant that the quality of the product depended heavily on the skill of the *ʿamila.* The level of skill becomes most apparent when a cocoon is completely unspun and a new cocoon thread has to be connected. If the worker "throws" too long a thread

length at too high an angle, then a *shalta,* or bump, appears in the thread. This defect obviously makes the thread less appealing from a commercial point of view and hence reduces its price on the market.

74. ACG, Beyrouth, carton 45, 1851–1881.

75. In an analysis of the woes of the silk industry in Mount Lebanon, a contemporary observer discussed the "waste of time" of the *ᶜamilat.* Specifically, he states that they spent 25 percent of their time—unnecessarily—boiling the cocoons, and another 15 percent tying threads that had broken during the spinning process. Haqqi, *Lubnan,* 1: 505.

76. Ducousso, *L'Industrie de la soie en Syrie,* 162.

77. des Villettes, *La Vie des femmes dans un village Maronite libanais,* 105.

78. Michel Feghali, *Proverbes et dictons Syro-Libanais: Texte arabe, transcription, traduction, commentaire et index analytique* (Paris: Institut d'Ethnologie, 1938), 237. Also, des Villettes discusses how women spent their income on gold; *La Vie des femmes dans un village Maronite libanais,* 69.

79. des Villettes, *La Vie des femmes dans un village Maronite libanais,* 105.

80. Ducousso, *L'Industrie de la soie en Syrie,* 162.

81. Louis Rene Villermé, *Tableau de l'état physique et moral des ouvriers employés dans les manufactures de coton, de laine et de soie,* 2 vols. (Paris: J. Renouard, 1840), 1: 67.

82. Ducousso, *L'Industrie de la soie en Syrie,* 155; emphasis mine.

83. M. Safi, "Mariage au nord du Liban," *Anthropos* 12–13 (1917–1918): 134.

84. Archives du Patriarchat Maronite de Bkirke, drawer of Bulus Masᶜad, June 12, 1860; quoted in Makdisi's *The Culture of Sectarianism,* 131.

85. Khatir, *Al-ᶜAdāt wal-taqālid al-lubnaniyya,* 26, 96.

86. William R. Polk, *The Opening of South Lebanon: 1788–1840* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1963), 175–189.

87. Khatir, *Al-ᶜAdāt wal-taqālid al-lubnaniyya,* 95, 106.

88. Ibrahim Aouad, *Le Droit privé des Maronites* (Paris: Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner, 1933), 32.

89. Amir Haydar al-Shihab, *Lubnan fi ᶜahd al-ʾumaraʾ al-shihabiyin,* ed. Asad Rustum and Fouad Bustani (Beirut: Catholic Press, 1933), 673.

90. Tannous, "Social Change in an Arab Village," 653.

91. Mikhail Nuᶜaymi, *Kan ya ma kan* (Beirut: Mu(ham)assasit Nawfal, 1983), 108.

92. Rustum Baz, *Mudhakkirat Rustum Baz* (Beirut: Publications de l'Université Libanaise, 1968), 124.

93. Antun Dahir al-ᶜAqiqi, *Thawra wa fitna fi Lubnan,* ed. and tr. Malcolm H. Kerr as *Lebanon in the Last Years of Feudalism, 1840–1860: A Contemporary Account by Antun Dahir al-ᶜAqiqi and Other Documents,* Oriental Series 33 (Beirut: Faculty of Arts and Sciences, American University of Beirut, 1959); see samples of letters addressed to different people on pages 96–150. For more details about the protocol of address among the *ʾaᶜyan* (notables) and between them and the *ᶜamah* (common people), see Haqqi's compendium *Lubnan,* 1: 160–165.

94. Quoted in Chevallier, *La Société du Mont Liban,* 204.

95. For an excellent description of the rise of urbane silk merchants in Beirut, whose fortunes and "modernity" had propelled them into social prominence,

read Leila Tarazi Fawaz's *Merchants and Migrants in Nineteenth-Century Beirut* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1983).

96. Tannous, "Social Change in an Arab Village," 655.

97. For instance, local chroniclers describe the consequences of the hard winters between 1778 and 1780, which left many peasants destitute, and of the cold fronts which swept the Mountain and damaged crops between 1795 and 1810. al-Shihab, *Lubnan,* 128. Ma^{c}louf recorded in his *zajaliyya* (folk poem) the misery that these natural calamities had caused, which included eating chaff-filled bread and grass. Ma^{c}alouf, "Zajaliyya," 239.

98. Although theoretically one could add to that definition the practice of hoarding goods at levels beyond those required by survival, in practice it would be hard to document what that level is per household.

99. Haqqi, *Lubnan,* 1: 194.

100. Ibid. Tahini is made from sesame oil, and it is usually mixed with carob molasses and eaten as a sweet. My father remembers how, as a teenager, he choked on the first banana he ever ate. His father—who had emigrated to Uruguay—had bought a banana in the town of Jubayl, where the crop was newly introduced, for his son to experience.

101. AE CC, Correspondance commerciale, Beyrouth, vol. 9, July 22, 1868; vol. 10, January 23, 1888, and February 1890.

102. This figure is obtained by dividing the 1.3 million kilograms by the 300,000 inhabitants of the mountain villages.

103. Michel Feghali, *Contes, légendes, coutumes populaires du Liban et de Syrie* (Paris: Librairie d'Amérique et d'Orient Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1935), 14.

104. Anis Furayha, *Modern Lebanese Proverbs: Collected at Ras al-Matn, Lebanon* (Beirut: American University of Beirut Press, 1953), 1: 23.

105. AE CC, Correspondance commerciale, Beyrouth, vol. 5, April 7, 1888. In 1905 the Port of Sidon imported 1.4 million kilograms of rice from England, and another 640,000 kilograms of Egyptian rice; in 1907 a total of 2.2 million kilograms were imported, 1.5 million of which was from England. "Trade in Sidon," *al-Mashriq* 9, no. 4 (September 1906): 158; and "Commercial Activities of Sidon," *al-Mashriq* 11, no. 3 (March 1908): 178.

106. AE CC, Correspondance commerciale, Beyrouth, vol. 10, July 1890.

107. AE CC, Correspondance commerciale, Beyrouth, vol. 10, May 30, 1889.

108. AE CC, Correspondance commerciale, Beyrouth, vol. 7, 1862.

109. AE CC, Correspondance commerciale, Beyrouth, vol. 10, May 30, 1889.

110. AE Correspondance commerciale, Beyrouth, "Rapports Commerciaux," dispatch no. 135, 1892.

111. See Praline Gay-Para, "Contes de la montagne libanaise" (Ph.D. diss., Université de Paris III, 1985).

112. Karam al-Bustani, *Hikayat lubnaniya* (Beirut: Dar Beirut, 1961), 204.

113. Akarli coined the term *long peace* to describe the state of relative political stability which settled over the Mountain during the time of the Mutasarrifiyya (1861–1917). Engin Akarli, *The Long Peace: Ottoman Lebanon, 1861–1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

114. AE CC, Correspondance commerciale, Beyrouth, vol. 9, dispatch no. 70, January 20, 1862.

115. Muhammad Fouad el-Shihabi, "Tarbiyat dud al-harīr," *al-Mashriq* 9, no. 4 (April 1906): 432–467.

116. AE CC, Correspondance commerciale, Beyrouth, vol. 10, July 29, 1890.

117. AE CC, Correspondance commerciale, Beyrouth, vol. 9, September 10, 1879.

118. Firro, "Silk and Agrarian Changes in Lebanon," divides the years between 1836 and 1911 into five phases of price changes. One could indeed subdivide these years in a multitude of ways depending on the issue presented. Here, I am simply trying to show the gross trends in price fluctuations.

119. Ducousso, *L'Industrie de la soie en Syrie,* 108, 110–111, and Chevallier, *La Société du Mont Liban,* 30.

120. In 1875 the French started to import increased quantities of cocoons from East Asia, specifically from Japan and China. These cocoons tended to be of better quality and even cheaper than those grown in Mount Lebanon, and the opening of the Suez Canal made the cost of transporting them quite reasonable. Lebanese silk factories were by the end of the nineteenth century scaling back their operations or even closing down. In part, this reduction was brought about by the fluctuation in world silk prices. However, it was also due to the fact that these producers could not procure the capital necessary to modernize their equipment in order to compete with European silk manufacturers; they were therefore left with high operational costs and low-quality silk. In a comparative study—done in 1914—of the cost-effectiveness of a "typical" Lebanese silk factory and that of an Italian factory, it became obvious that the more modern techniques of European factories gave them greater profits. For a Lebanese factory with eighty basins for dissolving silk cocoons, the gross profit per kilogram of (medium-quality) silk produced was in 1914 about 14.50 French francs. After deducting cost of operations and interest on loans, the owner of a factory was left with 3 francs per kilogram. Net profit was calculated to be about 6.8 percent of the total investment. If the price of silk dipped only 5 francs (out of 52 francs) per kilogram in any given year, then the factory owners would lose 2 francs per kilogram. Haqqi, *Lubnan,* 2: 599–613.

121. Ducousso, *L'Industrie de la soie en Syrie,* 111.

3. Emigration

1. Charles Issawi, *Economic History of the Middle East and North Africa* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 86; and Kemal Karpat, "Ottoman Emigration to America," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 17 (1984): 202–204.

2. Issawi, *Economic History of the Middle East and North Africa,* 86.

3. It was common in the nineteenth century for people to celebrate the bravery of a woman's husband with the saying, "Your husband, oh Na^{c}imi, traveled to Damascus and back by himself!"

4. See, for example, the histories of Jouplain, *La Question du Liban,* and of Bishop Yusuf Dibs, *al-Jami^{c} al-mufassal fi tarikh al-mawarina al-mua^{c}ssal* (Beirut: Lahad Khater, 1978).

5. Abraham Rihbany, *A Far Journey: An Autobiography* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1914); George Haddad, *Mount Lebanon to Vermont* (Rutland, Vt.: Tuttle, 1916); Philip Hitti, *The Syrians in America* (New York: George H. Doran, 1951).

6. Edward Riggs, "Syrians in Brooklyn," *New York Times,* 9 December 1896, 5.

7. Quoted in Engin Akarli's "Ottoman Attitudes towards Lebanese Emigration, 1885–1910," in *The Lebanese in the World: A Century of Emigration,* ed. Albert Hourani and Nadim Shehadi (London: Centre for Lebanese Studies and Tauris, 1992): 109–138, cf. 5.

8. For example, Clark Knowlton, "The Social and Spatial Mobility of the Syrian and Lebanese Community in São Paulo, Brazil," in *The Lebanese in the World: A Century of Emigration,* ed. Albert Hourani and Nadim Shehadi (London: Centre for Lebanese Studies and Tauris, 1992), 286.

9. Akarli, *The Long Peace,* 41.

10. Lahad Khatir, *ʿAhd al-mutasarrifin fi Lubnan* (Beirut: Catholic Press, 1962), 170.

11. Haqqi, *Lubnan,* 2: 242–243.

12. House of Commons, dispatch of 24 February 1861 from Beirut, *Parliamentary Papers, Accounts and Papers,* 1861, vol. 68, p. 439.

13. Since the British were considered supporters of the Druzes in the conflict of 1860, the previous statement could be construed as bias against the Christians of Lebanon.

14. National Archives, dispatches from the U.S. consuls in Beirut, U.S./18, Ravndal, 30 September 1903.

15. "The people back in the country think that all the houses in New York have ceilings of glass." *al-Huda,* 5 October 1903, 3.

16. Smithsonian Museum of American History, Alexa Naff Arab American Collection, Series 4-c-1, interview with Abe Abraham, August 23, 1979.

17. Ibid., interview with Tafeda Beshara, 1966.

18. Ibid., interview with Simʿan Abdenour, 1963.

19. For Brazil, Knowlton notes that, "according to official Brazilian statistics, only 158 immigrants from the entire Middle East entered Brazil between 1871 and 1891. From 1891 to 1916, 106,184 immigrants were recorded as coming from the lands of the Turkish empire." Knowlton, "The Social and Spatial Mobility of the Syrian and Lebanese Community in São Paulo, Brazil," 291–292. Similarly, Klich presents data from the *Resumen estadístico del movimiento migratorio en la República Argentina (1857–1924)* that show only 3,733 "Middle Easterners" to have immigrated into Argentina between 1880 and 1896, as opposed to over 132,000 immigrants who arrived there between 1897 and 1914. Ignacio Klich, "*Criollos* and Arabic Speakers in Argentina," in *The Lebanese in the World: A Century of Emigration,* ed. Albert Hourani and Nadim Shehadi (London: Centre for Lebanese Studies and Tauris, 1992), 244–245.

20. U.S. immigration reports for the years 1899–1914 show that out of a total of 86,075 immigrants from "Syria" only 3,556 were over the age of forty-five. Immigration Commission, *Reports of the Immigration Commission,* 63rd Cong., 3rd sess., 1915.

21. Petkovich, *Lubnan wal-Lubnaniyun,* 116.

22. PRO, FO 195/1305, no. 2, January 17, 1880.

23. Akarli, "Ottoman Attitudes towards Lebanese Emigration," 116.

24. Translation of the announcement of the decision, which appeared in the official gazette, *Hadiqat al-Akhbar.* National Archives, dispatches from the U.S. consuls in Beirut, U.S./18, Ravndal, 20 March 1899.

25. *Lubnan,* 26 October 1907, 1. In reports from travelers, the cost of the room was given, not surprisingly, as much higher than that advertised. On average, travelers would stay two weeks while awaiting transport across the Atlantic.

26. *Beirut,* no. 514, 18 March 1899, 1.

27. Amin Rihani, *The Book of Khalid* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1911), 28–30.

28. Compared with the $12.26 that a Pole brought along with her or the $21.32 that a Greek brought with him, the amount the peasants from Mount Lebanon brought with them indicates that they were far better off. Immigration Commission, *Reports of the Immigration Commission: Statistical Review of Immigration, 1820–1910,* 61st Cong., 3rd sess., 1911, S. Doc. 756, "Distribution of Immigrants, 1850–1900," table 35,357.

29. Smithsonian Museum of American History, Alexa Naff Arab American Collection, Series 4-c-5, interview with Frank Abodeely, 1980.

30. Ibid., series 4-c-1, interview with Skiyyé Sabha Samaha Beshara, 1962.

31. Petkovich, *Lubnan wal-Lubnaniyun,* 83.

32. ᶜAbdallah Saᶜid, *Tatawur al-mulkiyya al-ᶜiqariyya fi Jabal Lubnan fi ᶜahd al-Mutasarrifiyya* (Beirut: al-Mada, 1986), 242.

33. Labaki, "La Filature de la soie," 437.

34. Ducousso, *L'Industrie de la soie en Syrie,* 100–101.

35. AE CC, Correspondance commerciale, Beyrouth, vol. 9, dispatch no. 70, January 20, 1868.

36. Haqqi, *Lubnan,* 2: 490.

37. The figure for 1783 comes from the report of Volney in his *Voyage en Égypte et en Syrie* (2: 418.) The figure for 1860 is derived from Dominique Chevallier's essay "Densité optimale et heurt des communautés," which appeared in his book *La Société du Mont Liban,* 134. In that article Chevallier provides an excellent and meticulous discussion of the different estimates—given respectively by Henri Guys, Prosper Bouré, Tannus Shidyaq, and Achilles Laurent—of the population of Mount Lebanon. Guys seems to have exaggerated his estimates, but all three other authors gave a figure that corresponded more or less to 200,000. Petkovich, in his *Lubnan wal-Lubnaniyun,* quotes the "official" Ottoman census of 1862 as counting 99,927 males in all eight *cazas* (districts) of Mount Lebanon. Assuming that males made up slightly over 51 percent of the population, we can estimate that the total figure for that year would be about 195,935.

38. The figure of 280,000 was obtained from Chevallier, *La Société du Mont Liban,* 163–174. The statistics for 1913 were obtained from Haqqi, *Lubnan,*2: 262. The population figures for Mount Lebanon do include emigrants who paid taxes; however, those numbers were underreported by the local population to avoid paying taxes and to avoid legal problems during the periods when the Ottoman authorities prohibited emigration. For example, the population figure of 414,800, which was gathered through the census of 1913, included 124,400 emigrants; but other, more reliable statistics show that in 1913 there were about 280,000

emigrants from Mount Lebanon. Issawi, *Economic History of the Middle East and North Africa,* 86; Kemal H. Karpat, "Ottoman Emigration to America," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 17 (August 1984): 202–204. Thus it seems that less than half the emigrants were counted in the official census of Mount Lebanon. It follows that 155,600 emigrants were uncounted, and they are the ones mentioned in the text.

39. In one incident alone—the massacre of Dayr al-Qamar in 1860—anywhere from 1,200 to 2,000 people were killed. Churchill wrote that 1,200 men and women had taken refuge in the serai of Dayr al-Qamar. Charles H. Churchill, *The Druzes and the Maronites under Turkish Rule: From 1840 to 1860* (New York: Arno Press, 1973), 189–190. Abkarius, however, stated that 2,100 people were killed that day. Iskandar ibn Ya^cqub Abkarius, *Kitab nawadir fi malahim Jabal Lubnan,* ed. and tr. J. F. Scheltema as *The Lebanon in Turmoil: Syria and the Powers in 1860* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1920), 124. The French consul corraborated that figure in a June 28th dispatch Archives du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, DPB/B/12, Bentivoglio-Thouvenel, no. 29, 28 June 1860.

40. Petkovich, *Lubnan wal-Lubnaniyun,* 117. In the section on public health in Haqqi's book *Lubnan,* it was recorded that in the ten-month period between March and December of 1917 over 21 percent of the population was inoculated. Haqqi, *Lubnan,* 2: 284.

41. Khatir, *ᶜAhd al-mutasarrifin fi Lubnan,* 158–159.

42. AE CC, Correspondance commerciale, Beyrouth, vol. 5, f. 408, dispatch from Bourée, December 26, 1847. Of course this does not account for the number of babies who did not survive. From diverse family genealogies it becomes clear that on average each family lost at least one or two babies either at birth or soon afterward.

43. Furayha, *Hadara fi tarīq al-zawāl,* 121.

44. 1 hectare = 1.75 *dirhem,* and 1 hectare = 2.47 acres; thus, 1 *dirhem* = 1.41 acres, or 125,238 *dirhem*s = 176,586 acres.

45. Figure for 1864 from AE CC, Correspondance commerciale, Beyrouth, vol. 8, 1864; figure for 1918 from Latron, *La Vie rurale en Syrie et au Liban.*

46. Inheritance was divided equally among all the boys in the family, while among the Christians women were not given any inheritance.

47. Europe did not offer many opportunities for emigrants. Many parts of the continent (Italy, Greece, Norway, Poland) were suffering from overpopulation; others were politically unstable and unwelcoming of emigrants; and many did not have the space or economic resources to handle a large influx of people. In comparison, the Americas were in need of people to colonize vast territories (which previously belonged to native Americans), and their economies were in need of laborers. Finally, as relatively new "nations," these countries could not easily pretend to be as culturally distinct as many European nations claimed to be. This lack of a claim to cultural distinctness translated into a less hostile—but no less haughty—attitude toward emigrants.

48. Smithsonian Museum of American History, Alexa Naff Arab American Collection, Series 4-c-c, interviews with Michel H. and Ghandura H., and Nazira, Spring 1962.

49. Ibid., Series 4-c-1, interview with Tafeda B., Spring 1962.

50. Nu[c]aymi, *Kan ya ma kan,* 24–26.

51. Quoted in Zeine N. Zeine, *Arab-Turkish Relations and the Emergence of Arab Nationalism* (Beirut: Khayat's, 1958), 41–42.

52. National Archives, dispatches from the U.S. consuls in Beirut, U.S./18, Ravndal, Report on Emigration, 12 September 1903.

53. Alice Abraham spoke of how in 1903, while waiting to take the boat from Beirut to Marseilles, on her way to Cedar Rapids, Iowa, her uncle ("who had been to America") would teach her a few words in English. Smithsonian Museum of American History, Alexa Naff Arab American Collection, Series 4-c-1, interview with Alice Abraham, Spring 1962.

54. Pharès, *Les Maronites du Liban*, 27.

55. Joseph Abu-Najm, "Recherche ethnologique sur le mariage dans un village libanais: Bsus" (Ph.D. diss., Université de Paris III, 1984), 176.

56. John Gulick, *Social Structure and Culture Change in a Lebanese Village,* Viking Fund Publications in Anthropology 21 (New York: Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, 1955), 130.

57. Toufic Touma, *Un village de Montagne au Liban* (*Hadeth el-Jobbé*) (Paris: Mouton, 1958), 883, 887.

58. Judith R. Williams, *The Youth of Haouch el-Harimi: A Lebanese Village* (Cambridge, Mass.: Center for Middle Eastern Studies of Harvard University, Harvard University Press, 1968), 96.

59. Joseph Chamie, *Religion and Fertility: Arab Christian-Muslim Differentials* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 33.

60. Safi, "Mariage au nord au Liban," 134.

61. *Lubnan,* no. 117, 3 December 1895, 3.

62. Safi, "Mariage au nord du Liban," 134.

63. Immigration Commission, *Reports of the Immigration Commission: Statistical Review of Immigration, 1820–1910,* 61st Cong., 3rd sess., 1911, S. Doc. 756, "Distribution of Immigrants, 1850–1900," p. 69.

64. Robin Waterfield, personal communication, October 7, 1997.

65. Smithsonian Museum of American History, Alexa Naff Arab American Collection, Series 4-c-5, interview with Nicola Shamiyyi, April 1965.

66. Ibid., Series 4-c-1, interview with Abe Abraham, August 23, 1979.

67. Ibid., Series 4-c-5, interview with Mrs. Tom Amelia C. Unes, 1980.

68. Although women before had always had a strong role in the daily running of the family and did take part in making decisions, they did so in a circumspect way that did not challenge male leadership of the family and the clan.

69. Smithsonian Museum of American History, Alexa Naff Arab American Collection, Series 4-c-1, interview with Skiyyé Sabha Samaha Beshara, 1962.

70. Ibrahim Harfoush, "Misery of Emigration," *al-Mashriq,* no. 5 (1902): 569–572.

71. Michel Feghali, *La famille maronite au Liban* (Paris: Librairie d'Amérique et d'Orient, 1938), 12.

72. Feghali, *Contes légendes, coutumes populaires du Liban et de Syrie,* 245.

73. Stephan Thernstrom, *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1980), 130. Also see the *Annual Report of the General Commissioner of Immigration* (61st Cong., 1st sess., 1910, S. Doc. 346) for

a breakdown of the number of single versus married women who came to the United States. In addition, Tannous's dissertation, "Trends of Social and Cultural Change" (210–217), provides a good discussion of this issue.

74. Trevor Barony, "The Lebanese in Australia, 1880–1989," in *The Lebanese in the World: A Century of Emigration,* ed. Albert Hourani and Nadim Shehadi (London: Centre for Lebanese Studies and Tauris, 1992), 413–442; Knowlton, "The Social and Spatial Mobility of the Syrian and Lebanese Community in São Paulo, Brazil"; and Klich, "*Criollos* and Arabic Speakers in Argentina." Argentina stands out as a peculiar case among the emigrant destinations in that the number of women is much smaller there. From the few primary sources that I have come across I suspect an undercounting of women, but I have no positive proof.

75. No records whatsoever show employment of Druze women in the silk factories. In fact, many contemporary observers noted the refusal of that community to be engaged in the nascent industrial sector. See, for example, Henri Guys, *Relation d'un séjour de plusieurs années a Beyrout et dans le Liban* (Paris: Comptoir des Imprimeurs, 1850), 67. As for emigration, Naff—among other scholars—notes that Druze men constituted a small number of Lebanese emigrants, no more than 1 or 2 percent as late as 1914. Naff, *Becoming American,* 84–85.

4. The *Mahjar*

1. Smithsonian Museum of American History, Alexa Naff Arab American Collection, Series 4-c-c, interview with Michel Haddy, Spring 1962.

2. Ibid., Series 4-c-1, interview with Skiyyé Samaha, 1962.

3. Robin Waterfield, *Prophet: The Life and Times of Kahlil Gibran* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998), 27.

4. This phrase was common around the River Plate region of Argentina but is likely similar to the Spanish stock phrases supplied to peddlers in Uruguay. This phrase is cited in Estela Valverde's "Integration and Identity in Argentina: The Lebanese of Tucuman," in *The Lebanese in the World: A Century of Emigration,* ed. Albert Hourani and Nadim Shehadi (London: Centre for Lebanese Studies and Tauris, 1992), 316.

5. Personal interview with Najibé Ghanem, September 1998.

6. Smithsonian Museum of American History, Alexa Naff Arab American Collection, Series 4-c-c, interview with Michel Haddy, 1962.

7. Ibid., Series 4-c-1, interview with Tafeda Beshara.

8. Naff, *Becoming American,* 138–146.

9. *Barrio de los Turcos* was the name given to the neighborhoods occupied by the Lebanese immigrants, who were lumped with all immigrants from the Ottoman empire as *Turcos.* In these areas the *qashé* was known as *cajón de Turcos,* which in common parlance today means a messy drawer or crammed handbag. Valverde, "Integration and Identity in Argentina," cf. 7, 315.

10. Smithsonian Museum of American History, Alexa Naff Arab American Collection, Series 4-c-1, interview with Alice Abraham, 1962.

11. Ibid., Series 4-c-c, interview with Michel Haddy, Spring 1962.

12. "A Picturesque Colony," *New York Daily Tribune,* 2 October 1892.

13. Lucius Hopkins Miller, *Our Syrian Population; a Study of the Syrian Communities of Greater New York* (San Francisco: Reed, 1969 [1905]), 11. New York housed the largest community of Lebanese immigrants in the United States. For instance, according to Miller, in 1901–1902, 38 percent of the 4,333 arriving immigrants recorded that city as their final destination, while the remaining 2,658 immigrants were spread out among the other states. Moreover, an overwhelming 73 percent traveled to a destination in the North Atlantic states, with the great majority among these (2,900 out of a total of 3,163) residing in New York, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania. I state all these numbers to indicate only that: (1) statistics from the community in New York do give us a good idea of the overall pattern of employment followed by all emigrants, and (2) when Massachusetts and Pennsylvania (two highly industrialized states as opposed to those in the Midwest and the South) are added to the picture, the argument becomes even more persuasive.

14. Klich, "*Criollos* and Arabic Speakers in Argentina," 273.

15. The commentator, Rabbi Samuel Halphon, was actually chastising Ashkenazi Jewish itinerant vendors, whom he saw as a negative influence on the Jewish community in Argentina. However, his comments about the "get rich quick" aspect of peddling applies equally to the Lebanese immigrants. Quoted in ibid., 12–13, cf. 69, 275.

16. Quoted in Afif Tannous, "Acculturation of an Arab-Syrian Community in the Deep South," *American Sociological Review* 8 (June 1943): 270.

17. In her work on Jewish and Italian immigrant women in the Lower East Side of New York City, Ewen noted many similar reasons why members of these ethnic communities took up peddling. Peddling, she wrote, "was also a way of avoiding the discipline of factory labor. One woman, who had just lost her job in a sweatshop, contrasted her work to that of her peddling sister by noting that 'in selling pretzels and shoelaces we need not support the contractor and the other go-betweens, as we have to do now.'" Elizabeth Ewen, *Immigrant Women in the Land of Dollars: Life and Culture on the Lower East Side, 1890–1925* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1985), 74, cf. 12, 169.

18. This strong identification transcended the emigrant community and made its way into American popular culture in the form of the "Syrian" peddler, who was a prominent—albeit stereotypically lewd—character in the musical *Oklahoma*. A more flattering portrayal of Lebanese peddlers appeared in Christgau's children's book *The Laugh Peddler.* Published in 1968, the book recalls Christgau's fond memories of Hanna Yusuf, a peddler who made visits to her parents' farm in the lonely Minnesota countryside. Yusuf dispelled the monotony of farm life with his charm, friendliness, and compassion, and he ultimately saved two children who were lost in a blizzard. Alice Christgau, *The Laugh Peddler* (New York: Young Scott Books, 1968), 13–16.

19. Smithsonian Museum of American History, Alexa Naff Arab American Collection, Series 4-c-1, interview with Skiyyé Samaha, 1962.

20. Ibid., Series 4-c-c, interview with Michel Haddy, Spring 1962.

21. Smithsonian Museum of American History, Alexa Naff Arab American Collection, handwritten memoirs, Faris Naoum, 1957.

22. Ibid., Series 4-c-2, interview with Mary Matti, Spring 1962.

23. Ibid., Series 4-c-1, interview with Skiyyé Samaha, 1962

24. Naff, *Becoming American,* 188.

25. Smithsonian Museum of American History, Alexa Naff Arab American Collection, Series 4-c-1, interview with Mary Amyuni, Fall 1962. This and similar comments are quite intriguing because they give us a glimpse into how the Lebanese emigrants "saw" the United States. It is also a telling sign of the fact that they were not simply passive bystanders in a society controlled by "others" but rather were active in defining that society from the periphery inward.

26. Ibid., Series 4-c-3, interview with Watfa Massoud, August 1979.

27. Ibid., Series 4-c-d, interview with Mayme Faris and Louis Labaki, 1968.

28. U.S. Pushcart Commission of Greater New York, *Report of the Mayor's Pushcart Commission* (New York, 1907), 200.

29. Smithsonian Museum of American History, Alexa Naff Arab American Collection, Series 4-c-1, interview with Skiyyé Samaha, 1962

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid., handwritten memoirs, Faris Naoum, 1957.

32. Louise Seymour Houghton, "Syrians in the United States," pt. 2, *The Survey* 26, no. 2 (1911): 663.

33. Ibid., 662.

34. Miller, *Our Syrian Population,* 29.

35. Smithsonian Museum of American History, Alexa Naff Arab American Collection, Series 4-c-1, interview with Essa Samaha, 1966.

36. Ibid., Series 4-c-5, interview with Latifa Khoury, 1980.

37. Presbyterian Church in the United States, Board of Foreign Missions, "Correspondence and Reports," *Fifty-Fourth Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States* (New York, 1897), 225.

38. Miller, *Our Syrian Population,* 16.

39. Ibid., 9.

40. Ewen, *Immigrant Women in the Land of Dollars,* 150–152.

41. "Don't Like Arabs," *Cedar Rapids Evening Gazette,* 16 July 1901, 8.

42. Smithsonian Museum of American History, Alexa Naff Arab American Collection, Series 4-c-5, interview with Amelia and Haseby Abdelnour, Spring 1968.

43. Ibid., Series 4-c-1, interview with Tafeda Beshara, Spring 1968.

44. Miller, *Our Syrian Population,* 46. Of these folks, 164 were women.

45. Quoted in ibid., 149.

46. Louise Seymour Houghton, "Our Syrian Immigrants," *The Survey* 2, no. 3 (1911), 436.

47. Klich, "*Criollos* and Arabic Speakers in Argentina," 268–277; Knowlton, "The Social and Spatial Mobility of the Syrian and Lebanese Community in São Paulo, Brazil," 298.

48. Naff, *Becoming American,* 178.

49. Smithsonian Museum of American History, Alexa Naff Arab American Collection, Series 4-C-5, interview with Mayme Faris, 1980.

50. Ibid., interview with Budelia Malooley, 1980.

51. Ibid., Series 4-B, interview with Dorothy Lee Andrache (granddaughter of Sultana), January 18, 1991.

52. Ibid., Series 4-C-5, interview with Alice Assaley, 1963.

53. Houghton, "Syrians in the United States," pt. 2, *The Survey* 26, no. 2 (1911): 648.

54. Smithsonian Museum of American History, Alexa Naff Arab American Collection, Series 4-C-5, interview with Mayme Faris, 1980.

55. Ibid., interview with Eva Frenn, November 18, 1980.

56. Ibid., interview with Oscar Alwan, July 16, 1980.

57. Ibid., Series 4-C-1, interview with Skiyyé Samaha, 1962.

58. For an excellent study of the rise of the middle class in the United States, see Mary Ryan's *Cradle of the Middle Class: The Family in Oneida County, New York, 1790–1865* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981), and Stuart M. Blumin's *The Emergence of the Middle Class: Social Experience in the American City, 1760–1900* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

59. "American" reaction to immigrants ranged greatly over the social and economic map of the United States. The nativists rejected immigration as "mongrelizing" the species. See, for example, John Higham's *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativisim, 1860–1925* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1988). The elitist romantics imagined a "pure and noble East" that should not be sullied by "modern" industrialism. Waterfield's biography of Khalil Gibran has an interesting section on this group, particularly those residing in Boston. Waterfield, *Prophet,* 117–134. Finally, the social workers tried hard to assimilate immigrants into the mainstream of American life.

60. Cecilia Razovki, "The Eternal Masculine," *The Survey* 39 (1917): 117.

61. M. A. de Wolfe Howe, *Boston: The Place and the People* (New York: Macmillan, 1903), 382.

62. It is important to note that some social workers had a more critical approach to the ideal of middle-class life. For example, Simkhovitch noted that immigrant women had a stronger position within the family than "often obtains in families of a higher economic level." Mary Simkhovitch, *Neighborhood: My Story of Greenwich House* (New York: Norton, 1938), 136; also see Jane Addams, *Democracy and Social Ethics* (New York: Macmillan, 1902), 40–41. And young charity workers like Addams came to recognize that the "tidiness" of the middle-class charity worker was hardly a claim to cultural superiority when in fact it represented "parasitic cleanliness and a social standing attained only through status." Addams, *Democracy and Social Ethics,* 18.

63. S. Adolphus Knoph, "The Smaller Family," *The Survey* 37 (1916): 161.

64. Frederick A. Bushee, "The Invading Host," in *Americans in Process; a Study of Our Citizens of Oriental Ancestry,* ed. William Carlson Smith (Ann Arbor, Mich.: Edwards Brothers, 1937), 49, 52–53.

65. Robert Arhcery Woods and Albert J. Kennedy, *The Settlement Horizon: A National Estimate* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1922), 185.

66. Gwendolyn Mink, *The Wages of Motherhood: Inequality in the Welfare State, 1917–1942* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1995). See also Eileen Boris, "The Racialized Gendered State: Constructions of Citizenship in the United States," *Social Politics* 2 (Summer 1995): 160–180.

67. Philip Davis, *Street-Land: Its Little People and Big Problems,* (Boston: Small, Maynard, 1915), 227–229.

68. Alan Wieder, *Immigration, the Public School, and the 20th Century American Ethos: The Jewish Immigrant as a Case Study* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1985), 49. New York City, which had the most extensive public-school system, was teaching 1,376 foreign students in 1879 and 36,000 in 1905. Gustave Straubenmueller, "The Work of the New York Schools for the Immigrant Class," *Journal of Social Science* 44 (1906): 177.

69. John Buchanan, "How to Assimilate the Foreign Element in Our Population," *Forum* 32 (1902): 691.

70. Cited in Richard N. Juliani, "The Settlement House and the Italian Family," in *The Italian Immigrant Woman in North America,* ed. Betty Boyd Caroli, Robert Harvey, and Lydia Tomasi (Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1978), 119.

71. A prominent Lebanese physician in Birmingham took the congressman to task about this racial epithet in a letter to the editor which appeared in the *Birmingham Ledger* on September 20, 1907.

72. Discussion of this case—which captured the attention of the Lebanese community in the United States—appeared in a two-part essay entitled "Syrian Naturalization Question in the United States," written by Joseph Ferris and published in the February and March 1928 issues of the *Syrian World.*

73. Houghton, "Syrians in the United States," pt. 1, *The Survey* 26, no. 1 (1911), 492.

74. According to Higham, *The Menace,* an anti-Catholic, nativist newspaper, grew between 1908 and 1911 from a yearly circulation of 120,000 copies to 1,000,000. In many of its issues it propagandized that the Vatican was ordering Italian emigration to the United States in order to dilute and subvert its "American" nature. Higham, *Strangers in the Land,* 64.

75. Few have studied the history of the Arabic press in the United States. The only major study of this medium was a dissertation written by Melki; it was mostly a compilation of the biographies of the various editors of the newspapers and magazines, as well as a discussion of the topics that were generally covered. Henri Melki, "Arab American Journalism" (Ph.D. diss., Georgetown University, 1972).

76. *al-Huda,* 18 January 1905, 2.

77. "Wit and Humor," *al-Huda,* 22 March 1898, 16.

78. Italians in the United States experienced a similar process of identity formation. For example, in Chicago an Italian-language radio hour had to appeal to all Italians, and that meant emphasizing and inventing aspects of Italian culture and experience that transcended specific villages and regions; at the same time it had to address the concerns of Italians in Chicago.

79. Enamored as he was with quantifying the "colony of Syrians" in New York, Miller found that 17.7 percent of its members were from north Lebanon (Kisrawan, North Metn), 14 percent from "northern Syria" (in reality the Bsherri, Zghorta, and Ehden regions), 21 percent from Beirut, 5.2 percent from southern Lebanon (South Metn, Shūf), 25.1 percent from Zahleh and its environs, and 1.25 percent from Rachaya and Marjᶜuyun. Miller, *Our Syrian Population,* 18.

80. Smithsonian Museum of American History, Alexa Naff Arab American Collection, Series 4-C-5, interview with Anthony L. and George J. B., and Edna M., June 1980.

81. This is not the place to discuss at length the development of this identity, but it is certainly worth delving into, particularly as it pertains to the growth of various brands of nationalist movements in Lebanon.

82. William Essey, "Lest We Forget: Raphael, Bishop of Brooklyn," *The Word* 20 (May 1976): 12.

83. Smithsonian Museum of American History, Alexa Naff Arab American Collection; Series 4-B-3, interview with Victoria Samaha, May 1962.

84. Najla Saliba of Detroit described such a situation. Her Melkite club was started by Melkites from various parts of Mount Lebanon and Syria. However, "they couldn't get together because each was from a different village or city. Everybody wanted to come forward in the name of the place he came from." Ibid., Series 4-B-1, interview with Najla Saliba, May 1962.

85. "Talk of Abu Hatab," *al-Huda,* 8 April 1905, 4.

86. Salim Mukarzel, "Knocking on the Door," *al-Huda,* 22 March 1898, 9.

87. "The Visit," *al-Huda*, 3 January 1899, 17.

88. Ibid.

89. Elias Qirqmaz, "The Misery of the Syrian Child in the Crib, and in the House, and in the Market," *al-Huda*, 18 April 1899, 13.

90. Ibid., 14.

91. Ibid., 15.

92. Nasrallah Elias Faris, "The Syrians and Schools," *al-Huda*, 17 April 1903, 2.

93. Ibid.

94. Elias Nassif Elias, "The Syrian Woman and the Qashé," *al-Huda*, 26 May 1903, 2.

95. Ibid.

96. Yusuf al-Za[c]ini, "The Female Qashé Sellers," *al-Huda*, 12 July 1903, 2.

97. Yusuf Wakim, "Necessity for Putting a Limit of Law That Prohibits the Emigration of the Syrian Woman to American," *al-Huda*, 13 January 1908, 4.

98. Ibid.

99. Elias, "The Syrian Woman and the Qashé," 2.

100. In the 1860s American writers on sexuality, such as Doctor R. T. Trall, placed the "passional expression of love" within the house and gave responsibility for its control to the woman. And while admitting the possibility that women can experience sexual pleasure, he and other writers either subordinated female sexual desire, or lust, "to the passive, loving faculties of feminine character or denied [it] entirely." Mary Ryan, *The Empire of the Mother: American Writing about Domesticity, 1830–1860* (New York: Haworth Press, 1982), 105.

101. "Thoughts of Thoughts," *al-Huda*, 12 January 1905, 3.

102. See Christine Stansell, *City of Women: Sex and Class in New York, 1789–1860* (New York: Knopf, 1986), 219.

103. Nasrallah Faris, "Men and Woman Were Created to Work," *al-Huda,* 11 June 1903, 3.

104. [c]Afifa Karam, *al-Huda*, 14 July 1903, 2. At the beginning of this article, Karam wrote, without the slightest hint of sarcasm, "I read above the article [by

Yusuf al-Za^{c}ini entitled "The Female Qashé Sellers"] words from *al-Huda* asking 'educated men to respond and criticize' without including educated women. But I ask from *al-Huda* to excuse this action of mine [writing in response]." At the end of the article, the editor of *al-Huda* wrote, "We wish if more of educated women were like the writer of this article, not afraid to appear in a literary setting nor of the objections against them by foolish people." Both comments were indications that the entry of women writers into this field was a fairly novel event.

105. *al-Huda*, 5 March 1899, 15–17, and 11 September 1906, 3.

106. *al-Huda*, 8 April 1900, 2.

107. ^{c}Afifa Karam, "The Woman as She Is Today," *al-Huda*, 23 August 1898.

108. Mariam Yusuf al-Zammar, "The Mother and Moral Upbringing," *al-Huda*, 10 June 1908, 3. In 1903 Karam noted in *al-Huda* (14 July 1903, 2) that only 5 percent of "emigrant women" were educated. This is a difficult statistic to verify. Our other source of information is immigration records, which give a slightly higher figure for literacy among "Syrian" emigrant women. Immigration Commission, *Reports of the Immigration Commission: Statistical Review of Immigration, 1820–1910,* 61st Cong., 3rd sess., 1911, S. Doc. 756, p. 86.

109. *al-Huda*, 1 September 1900, 2.

110. al-Zammar, "The Mother and Moral Upbringing," 3.

111. ^{c}Afifa Karam, *al-Huda,* 6 June 1901, 3.

112. *al-Huda*, 1 September 1900, 3.

113. ^{c}Afifa Karam, *al-Huda*, 21 August 1903, 3.

114. ^{c}Afifa Karam, *al-Huda*, 2 September 1902, 2.

115. ^{c}Afifa Karam, *al-Huda*, 18 January 1905, 2.

116. Ibid.

117. Sahib al-Khatarat, "Thoughts of Thoughts," *al-Huda*, 12 January 1905, 2.

118. A Pure Syrian Woman, "Layla," *al-Huda,* 2 March 1899, 19.

119. *al-Huda*, 5 March 1899, 15.

120. *al-Huda*, 3 November 1900, 17.

121. A. Hakim, *Syrian World*, 3 (October 1928): 51.

122. Antoine G. Karam, "Gibran's Concept of Modernity," in *Tradition and Modernity in Arabic Literature*, ed. Issa J. Boullata and Terri DeYoung (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1997), 33.

123. Khalil Gibran, *Spirits Rebellious* (*al-ʾArwah al-Mutamarrida*) (Cairo: al-^{c}Arab lil-Bustāni, 1991 [1908]).

124. Nu^{c}aymi, "The Barren," in *Kan ya ma kan,* 59–94.

125. Abdel Nour Jabbour, *Étude sur la poésie dialectale au Liban* (Beirut: Publications de l'Université Libanaise, 1957), 140–142, 152.

126. There is a multitude of books on this subject for other ethnic communities in the United States. For the Italian community, see, for example, Donna Gabaccia's *From Sicily to Elizabeth Street : Housing and Social Change among Italian Immigrants, 1880–1930* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984), and Michael La Sorte's *La Merica: Images of Italian Greenhorn Experience* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1985).

127. Cartoons appeared in Nahma Sandrow, *Vagabond Stars: A World History of Yiddish Theater* (New York: Harper & Row, 1977).

5. Back to the Mountain

1. A whole host of studies on "modernity" in the Middle East—especially as it pertains to the construction of the category "woman"—have come out. The publication of Abu-Lughod's edited book *Remaking Women: Feminism and Modernity in the Middle East,* with eight contributors, is a sign of the maturing of this area of studies. For specific examples, see Najmabadi's *The Story of the Daughters of Quchan,* or Pollard's dissertation, "Nurturing the Nation."

2. Sangari and Vaid, *Recasting Women,* 10–11.

3. National Archives, dispatches from the U.S. Consuls in Beirut, U.S./143, Ravndal, "Naturalized Americans of Syrian Origin," 14 October 1903.

4. Ibid., U.S/256, Ravndal, "Report on Emigration," 12 September 1903.

5. This hypothetical number was arrived at in the following manner. If we assume a constant rate of return of 12,000 individuals every five years (an unsubstantiated guess, to be sure), then between 1894 and 1914 we can calculate that 48,000 individuals returned to the Mountain. (Although emigration started around 1887, it would have been at least seven years before any appreciable numbers started the journey back.) In this same time period about 106,715 emigrants arrived in the United States. This estimate leads us (by dividing 48,000 by 106,715) to 45 percent.

6. Immigration Commission, *Reports of the Immigration Commission: Statistical Review of Immigration, 1820–1910,* 61st Cong., 3rd sess., 1911, S. Doc. 756.

7. *Rapport du Commandant Pechkoff,* Archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, vol. 410, p. 59, 19 May 1927; quoted in Hashimoto's "Lebanese Population Movement," 66.

8. Arthur Ruppin, *Syrien als Wirtschaftsgebiet* (Berlin: E S. Mittler & Sohn, 1917), 19.

9. Nabil Harfush, *al-Hūdūr al-Lubnani fi al-ᶜalam,* vol. 1 (Beirut: Matabiᶜ al-Karim al-Hadithah, 1974), 49.

10. Our only solace is that this is a fairly common state of affairs for all studies of returning emigrants. Gabaccia discusses the problem with official Italian and American statistics in her study *Militants and Migrants,* 177–179. A finnish scholar concluded his survey of Finland's official statistics on return migration by describing them as "incontrovertibly extremely deficient"; Kero, "The Return of Emigrants from America to Finland," 11–13. On the problems of German statistics for the pre-1880 era, see Kamphoefner, "The Volume and Composition of German-American Return Migration," 296–299. Even the editor of a volume of papers from a European conference on international return migration (mainly since World War II) could conclude only that "returns are quite difficult to assess with any statistical accuracy"; Daniel Kubat, ed., *The Politics of Return: International Return Migration in Europe; Proceedings of the First European Conference on International Return Migration (Rome, November 11–14, 1981)* (New York: Center for Migration Studies, 1983), 4.

11. The calculations for this number were based on the fact that, by 1914, 136,060 Lebanese had emigrated to Argentina, another 55,954 had arrived in Brazil, and 106,424 had come to the United States. Sources for Argentina: *La*

Siria nueva: Obra historica, estadistica y comercial de la colectividad Sirio-Otomana en las Republicas Argentina y Uruguay (Buenos Aires: Empressa Assalam, 1917), 19; for Brazil: *Revista de Imigração e Colonização* (Rio de Janeiro: Ministério das Relaçes Exteriores, July 1940); for the United States: Immigration and Naturalization Service, *Annual Report 1914,* 63rd Cong., 3rd sess., 1915.

12. Mark Wyman, *Round-Trip to America: The Immigrants Return to Europe, 1880–1930* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1993), 4.

13. Edward Steiner, *On the Trail of the Immigrant* (New York: Revell, 1906), 334–335.

14. Quoted in Jabbour, *Étude sur la poésie dialectale au Liban,* 159.

15. Quoted in ibid., 176.

16. *Forverts,* 24 November 1902, quoted in Zosa Szajkowski, "Deportation of Jewish Immigrants and Returnees before World War I," *American Jewish Historical Quarterly* 67 (June 1978): 305.

17. *Lubnan,* 1 October 1906.

18. *Lubnan,* 13 September 1906.

19. See Khatir's *ʿAhd al-mutasarrifin fi Lubnan* and Rustum's *Lubnan fi ʿahd al-Mutasarrifiyya.*

20. See Salim Hassan Hashi, *Yawmiyyāt lubnani fi ayām al-Mutasarrifiyya* (Beirut: Lahad Khater, 1983).

21. See Jouplain's *La Question du Liban* for a treatise on an independent Christian Lebanon.

22. Yusuf Asʿad Daghir, *Qamus al-sahafa al-lubnaniyya (1858–1974)* (Beirut: al-Jamiʿ ah al-Lubnaniyya: al-Tawzʿi, al-Maktabah al-Sharqiyah, 1978), 5.

23. Haqqi, *Lubnan*, 2: 222.

24. By the end of the nineteenth century, new Cairo had expanded north of the old city and then west to include the "modern" quarters of Zamalek. Damascus was also expanding into new urbanized areas for the middle classes up the slopes of Jabal Qasiyun. For Heliopolis, a modern, middle-class neighborhood of Cairo, see Robert Ilbert, *Héliopolis: le Caire, 1905–1922: Genèse d'un ville* (Paris: Editions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1981), or Trevor Mostyn, *Egypt's Belle Époque: Cairo: 1827–1952* (New York: Quartet, 1989). One of the best studies of Istanbul which documents the demographic growth of the city as well as the changing habits of its emerging middle class is Alan Duben and Cem Behar, *Istanbul Households: Marriage, Family, and Fertility, 1880–1940* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), esp. 87–121, 148–158, 194–248.

25. May Davie, "Beyrouth et ses faubourgs: 1840–1940," in *Les Cahiers du Centre d'Etude et de Recherche sur le Moyen-Orient Contemporain*, no. 15 (Beirut: Centre d'Etude et de Recherche sur le Moyen-Orient Contemporain, 1996), chs. 1, 2. This same phenomenon was taking place in Algiers, Rabat, and Tunis, where the new *villes* were growing outside the boundaries of the old ones and where the middle-class merchants, bankers, clerks, doctors, lawyers, journalists, and government employees lived along with a sizable foreign community.

26. This phenomenon was not limited to Lebanon. "The American house" was a common sight across the European landscape. As Italy's statesman

Francesco Saverio Nitti observed, "In tiny villages, the pick-axe strikes down the filthy hovels . . . and the new homes of 'Americani' began to rise." Quoted in Francesco Paolo Cerase, "From Italy to the United States and Back: Returned Migrants, Conservative or Innovative?" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1971), 111–112. One finds similar observations in Julianna Puskás, *From Hungary to the United States (1880–1914),* tr. Eva Palmai (Budapest: Akademiai Kiado, 1982), 79–80; Cinel, *The National Integration of Italian Return Migration,* 163–164; Immigration Commission, *Reports of the Immigration Commission: Statistical Review of Immigration,* 61st Cong., 3rd sess., 1911, S. Doc. 747.

27. For a detailed description of this house, see Michel Feghali, "Notes sur la maison libanaise," in *Mélanges René Basset* (Paris: Publications de l'Institut des Hautes-Études Marocaines, 1923), 1: 163–186.

28. A *tannour* is a half-domed metallic surface where thin, pizzalike crusts of dough are placed to cook. It sits on top of a ring of stones and is heated from underneath with wood.

29. Most notable of those with clouded notions was Alphonse de Lamartine, whose book, *A Pilgrimage to the Holy Land; Comprising Recollections, Sketches, and Reflections, Made during a Tour in the East* (New York: D. Appleton, 1848), was naive in its observations to say the least, full of preconceived romantic images that had little to do with reality. Even contemporaries were aware of that bias. Another French romantic observer was the Vicomtesse d'Aviau de Piolant, who recorded her highly impressionistic recollections about Mount Lebanon in a book entitled *Au pays des Maronites* (Paris: Librairie H. Oudin, 1882). Lebanese folklorists provided equally romantic images of the Lebanese house and of village life in general, but for more political reasons. Most of these writers tended to be Maronite Christians, who were loathe to admit any relationship between the surrounding Arab culture and that of the Maronite community. Thus they argued, with a great stretch of the imagination at times, that the Maronites had safeguarded their Aramaic, Syriac, Phoenician, *marada*, or even European heritage. For example, Feghali, in his article "Notes sur la maison libanaise," wrote, "The conclusion which we can reach is that on this point in particular, as with many others, the Arab and Turkish civilization did not succeed, at any moment, to impose itself in Lebanon. The Lebanese, in addition to having kept their vocabulary in large part Syriac, still exist in the same way as their ancestors from the early Christian centuries. . . . It is for this that we still find today a striking similarity between the actual inhabitants of Lebanon and the ancient peoples of Syria: Arameans, Canaanites and Hebrews" (185–186).

30. Urquhart, *The Lebanon*, 1: 233–234.

31. F. Bart, *Scènes et tableaux de la vie actuelle en Orient—Mont Liban* (Paris, 1883), 42.

32. Wood was becoming a rare commodity in Lebanon as early as the 1860s and 1870s. "Because of the unchecked logging and herding of goats in the mountains Lebanon has lost the great majority of its wood resources." Haqqi, *Lubnan*, 2: 94.

33. A nice house of this type with six pillars would have measured about eighty-eight square meters.

34. For a list of the household possessions of one of the Khazin *shuyukh,* see Dominique Chevallier's "Que possédait un cheikh Maronite en 1859? Un document de la famille al-Khazin," *Arabica* 7 (1960): 80–84.

35. Polk, *The Opening of South Lebanon*, 184.

36. Gulick notes that "none of the existing examples of it [this new style of house] in Munsif is probably more than a hundred and fifty years old [1800], and some are probably as little as sixty years old [1890]." *Social Structure and Cultural Change in a Lebanese Village*, 34. In the village of Lehfed, local informants indicated the late 1800s as the time when this new style of house appeared in the village (personal interviews with the priest and the mayor of the village).

37. Friedrich Ragette, *Architecture in Lebanon: The Lebanese House during the 18th and 19th Centuries* (Delmar, N.Y.: Caravan Books, 1980), 45.

38. des Villettes, *La Vie des femmes dans un village Maronite libanais*, 9.

39. See, for example, Soraya Antonius's *Architecture in Lebanon* (Beirut: Khayat's, 1965) and Ragette's *Architecture in Lebanon*.

40. See, for example, Robert Saliba's *Beirut 1920–1940: Domestic Architecture between Tradition and Modernity* (Beirut: Order of Engineers and Architects, 1998), esp. ch. 4.

41. Zeynep Çelik, *The Remaking of Istanbul: Portrait of an Ottoman City in the Nineteenth Century* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1986), 137.

42. Ragette, *Architecture in Lebanon,* 92.

43. Feghali, "Notes sur la maison libanaise," 178.

44. Ibid., 169.

45. Gulick, *Social and Cultural Change in a Lebanese Village*, 34.

46. AE CC, Correspondance commerciale, Beyrouth, July 29, 1890.

47. Ibid.

48. Ernest Weakley, "Report on the Condition and Prospects of British Trade in Syria," *Parliamentary Accounts & Papers*, Cd. 5707 (1911).

49. AE CC, Correspondance commerciale, Beyrouth, vol. 10, report entitled "Situation de l'industrie et du commerce de Beyrouth en 1892," April 7, 1888; and vol. 13, May 13, 1905. Weakley, "Report on the Condition and Prospects of British Trade in Syria."

50. Weakley, "Report on the Condition and Prospects of British Trade in Syria," 157.

51. National Archives, dispatches from the U.S. consul in Beirut, U.S./256, Ravndal, "Report on Emigration," 12 September 1903.

52. AE CC, Correspondance commerciale, Beyrouth, February 1890, and dispatch no. 135, 1892.

53. Ibid., vol. 9, 1868; vol. 11, 1895; and vol. 13, 1905. The number of chairs is calculated on the basis of the statistics supplied by the French consulate general in its annual report, which stated that 200,000 francs worth of wooden furniture was imported, with a dozen costing between 25 and 35 francs. The number of imported iron beds is based on statistics supplied by the French consulate general in its commercial correspondence of April 1888 (vol. 10). According to the French consul, the British shipped about 5,178 metric tons worth of iron products to Beirut. Of this, 1,250 tons were steel bars intended for construction, and there were 500 more tons of miscellaneous items. The other 3,428 tons were primarily

"English beds that cost about 660 piasters each." Assuming an average weight of 250 kilograms per bed, we arrive at an approximate number of 13,172 sold in one year.

54. Weakley, "Report on the Condition and Prospects of British Trade in Syria," 169.

55. *Lubnan*, 10 June 1907, 1.

56. Khatir, *Al-ʿAdāt wal-taqālid al-lubnaniyya*, 26, 96.

57. Elias Masabki, "Imitation and Us, Where Is the End," *al-Mashriq* (1913): 636-637.

58. *Lubnan*, 10 June 1907, 4

59. Shukri al-Bustani, *Dayr al-Qamar fi akhir al-qarn al-tasiʿ ʿashar* (Beirut: Lebanese University Press, 1969), 78–113. Also, interview with author's father with regard to father's childhood.

60. Shakir al-Khuri, *Majmaʿ al-masarrat* (Beirut: Al-Ijtihad Press, 1908), 43.

61. During the summer, the blending of the two spaces achieved its epitome when the family constructed on its plot an *ʿarzal*, which is a hut made of dried tree branches. Many of the family, especially the men, stayed in their *ʿarzal* throughout most of the summer.

62. al-Bustani, *Dayr al-Qamar fi akhir al-qarn al-tasiʿ ʿashar*, 67.

63. Ibrahim Bayk al-Aswad, *Daleel Lubnan* (Baʿabda: al-Matbaʿ al-ʿUthmaniya, 1906), 359.

64. Ibid., 357.

65. Guys, *Rélation d'un séjour de plusieurs années a Beyrout et dans le Liban*, 98, 102.

66. *al-Muhazab*, 21 December 1907, 1.

67. al-Aswad, *Daleel Lubnan*, 336.

68. Ibid., 329–330.

69. For example, *al-Hasnaʾ* had two articles, in one year, on the proper manner of breastfeeding (vol. 1, 1907, 187 and 191). Another magazine, *Fatat Lubnan,* also dedicated regular space on its pages to this subject. However, being more of a feminist journal, it advocated that girls be breastfed as long as boys.

70. Among peasants the task of caring for an infant was not as complex. Generally, a baby was swaddled tightly and placed in a crib for the first few months of life. More relevantly, the task of breastfeeding the child was considered communal. The tradition was for nursing mothers of the village to visit a new mother shortly after the arrival of her baby and for each of them to suckle the baby at her breast. This was a symbolic gesture of their willingness to be responsible for the baby, but in fact the practice of exchanging nursing continued until the baby was weaned a year later.

71. *al-Hasnaʾ* 1 (January 1910): 380.

72. Rifaʿa Tahtawi, *Murshid al-amin lil-banat wal-banin*, vol. 2 of *al-ʿAmal al-kamila li-Rifaʿa R afiʿ al-Tahtawi/ Dirasā t wa-tahqīq Muhammad Imarah* (Beirut: al-Muassasa al-ʿArabiyya lil-Dirasāt wa-al-Nashr, 1973), 369–378.

73. *al-Hasnaʾ* 1 (June 1909): 26.

74. *al-Hasnaʾ* 2 (March 1911): 381; 1 (January 1910): 214; 1 (September 1909): 123–125.

75. *al-Hasnaʾ* 1 (January 1910): 381.

76. *Fatat Lubnan* 1 (January 1914): 15.

77. Aswad, *Daleel Lubnan*, 360, 358.

78. Elias Tweyni, "The Woman," *Lubnan*, 1 October 1895.

79. Ester Muyal, "The Woman's Kingdom: A Discourse on Domestic Politics," *al-Hasna*ʾ 1 (July 1909): 52–55.

80. Ryan, *The Empire of the Mother,* 17–18.

81. Quoted in ibid., 358.

82. *Fatat Lubnan* 1 (January 1914): 10.

83. *al-Hasna*ʾ 1 (20 June 1909): 20.

84. H. J. Turtle, *Quaker Service in the Middle East*: *With a History of the Brummana High School*, *1876–1975* (London: Friends Service Council, 1975), 37.

85. This kind of argument was common among early advocates of female education in most areas. For instance, in Egypt, Qasim Amin wrote in his *Tahrir al-mar*ʾ*a* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Taraqqi, 1899) that educating women was an essential part of improving society and providing suitable partners for educated middle-class men.

86. Ibid., 358.

87. al-Aswad, *Daleel Lubnan*, 362.

88. A list of women's journals that were published in the first decade of the twentieth century includes the following magazines:

TITLE OF MAGAZINE	EDITOR
al-Fatat (The Young Woman)	Hind Nawfal
*Mir'at al-Hasna*ʾ (Mirror of the Beautiful)	Miriam Mazhar
al-ʿAila (The Family)	Ester Muyal
*al-Mar*ʾ*a* (The Woman)	Anisa ʿAtallah
al-Saʿada (Happiness)	Rogina ʿAwad
al-Zahra (The flower)	Mariam Masʿad
Majalat al-Saydat wal-Banat (Magazine for the Ladies and the Girls)	Rosa Antoun
al-Moda (The Fashion)	Salim Khalil Farah
*al-Hasna*ʾ (The Beautiful)	Jurji Nqula Baz
al-ʿArus (The Bride)	Mary ʿAjmi
al-ʿalam al-Jadid (The New World)	ʿAfifa Karam
Fatat Lubnan (Lebanon's Girl)	Salima Abi Rashed

89. *Fatat Lubnan* 1 (December 1914): 15–17.

90. Ibid., 17.

91. Quoted in Tani Barlow, "Theorizing Woman: Funu, Guojia, Jiating (Chinese Women, Chinese State, Chinese Family)," in *Feminism and History*, ed. Joan Wallach Scott (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 204.

92. "An Essay Devoted to Education of Girls (*Maqalah-*ʿ*i makhsus dar ta*ʿ*lim-i* ʿ*awrat*)," *Habl al-matin* 9, no. 12 (6 January 1902): 16. Quoted in Afsaneh Najmabadi, "Crafting an Educated Housewife in Iran," in *Remaking Women: Feminism and Modernity in the Middle East*, ed. Lila Abu-Lughod (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1998), 104.

93. This intertwining of a strong "nation" and the new "woman" derived in part from the similarity in the nature of European imperial and colonial projects

across the globe. Whether in South Asia, China, Egypt, West Africa, or North Africa, colonialists underscored the "need" for their occupation and domination through the argument of cultural superiority and the notion of "lifting the lesser peoples." This need was no where more "evident" to the Europeans than when it came to the position of women in these colonized societies. Thus sati, purdah, foot-binding, and harem became signifiers of the supposed backwardness of the colonized and—in reverse—of the superiority of the colonizer.

94. Turtle, *Quaker Service in the Middle East*, 42.

95. H. Jalabert, *Un montagnard contre le pouvoir: Liban 1866* (Beirut: al-Machreq, 1978), 134.

96. *Les Pères Jesuits à Ghazir 1844–1944* (Jounieh: Kaslik University Press, 1944), 56.

97. Khatir, *Al-ᶜAdāt wal-taqālid al-lubnaniyya*, 371.

98. Papers of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Houghton Library, Harvard University, series ABC: 16.6, vol. iii, document 217, "Schedule of Schools in Syria 1826."

99. Ibid., series ABC: 16.8.1, vol. iv, report on the Syrian Mission dated 31 December 1835.

100. Haqqi, *Lubnan*, 2: 192.

101. AE CC, Correspondance commerciale, Beyrouth, vol. 8, annex to dispatch no. 39, March 22, 1870.

102. Ibid.

103. Petkovich, *Lubnan wal-Lubnaniyun*, 150.

104. Ibid., 135–137.

105. Haqqi, *Lubnan*, 2: 200.

106. Ibid., 2: 572.

107. J. D. Maitland-Kirwan, *Sunrise in Syria: A Short History of the British Syrian Mission, from 1860–1930* (London: British Syrian Mission, 1930), 40–44.

108. Cited in Vital Cuinet, *Syrie*, *Liban et Palestine: Géographie administrative, statistique, descriptive, et raisonnée* (Paris: Lerous, 1896), 72–73.

109. Ibid., 83.

110. Jaber, "Pouvoir et société au Jabal ᶜAmil de 1749 à 1920," 184.

111. All the preceding comparative figures were collated from Kemal H. Karpat's *Ottoman Population, 1830–1914: Demographic and Social Characteristics* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), Tables IV.3 (Population Distribution) and IV.12 (Pupils Attending Schools), 211 and 219, respectively.

112. Ibid., Table IV.12 (Pupils Attending Schools), 219.

113. Tannous, "Trends of Social and Cultural Change," 178.

114. Ibid.

115. Report of the Presbyterian Mission at Tripoli, Lebanon, in Presbyterian Church in the United States, Board of Foreign Missions, *Fifty-fifth Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States* (New York, 1898).

116. AE CC, Correspondance commerciale, Beyrouth, vol. 12, "Rapport sur l'état économique, sociale et politique du Mont Liban," 1901.

117. Rates for the United States: Miller, *Our Syrian Population,* 23; for Brazil: Knowlton, "The Social and Spatial Mobility of the Syrian and Lebanese

Community in São Paulo, Brazil," 298; for Argentina: Klich, "*Criollos* and Arabic Speakers in Argentina," 264.

118. Pharès, *Les Maronites du Liban*, 28.

119. Quoted in Tannous, "Social Change in an Arab Village," 657.

120. Ibid. To marry a boy off at such an early age guaranteed two things. First, his economic dependence and young age made him more susceptible to his parents' will. Second, and perhaps more important, was the issue of sexuality. In a close living environment—within the tiny houses as well as within the small village—sexuality had to be tightly controlled in order to safeguard the social structure from the upheaval that might be set loose by premarital sex.

121. This term was quite common in the villages during the nineteenth century, but its use has lapsed to the point that today not many would understand the reference. See Furayha, *Hadara fi tarīq al-zawāl*, 152.

122. See Robert Creswell, "Lineage Endogamy among Maronite Mountaineers," in *Mediterranean Family Structures* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 101.

123. Polk, *The Opening of South Lebanon*, 175–189.

124. Abu-Najm, "Recherche ethnologique sur le mariage dans un village libanais," 122.

125. al-Bustani, *Dayr el-Qamar fi akhir al-qarn al-tasi*ᶜ *ᶜashar*, 118.

126. Khatir, *Al-ᶜAdāt wal-taqālid al-lubnaniyya*, 246.

127. Anis Furayha, *A Dictionary of Modern Lebanese Proverbs* (Beirut: Libraire du Liban, [1974]), 196

128. Abu-Najm, "Recherche ethnologique sur le mariage dans un village libanais," 147.

129. Polk, *The Opening of South Lebanon*, 175–189.

130. Gulick, *Social Structure and Culture Change in a Lebanese Village*, 130.

131. Jane Schneider, "Of Vigilance and Virgins: Honor, Shame, and Access to Resources in Mediterranean Societies," *Ethnology* 10, no. 1 (January 1971): 1–24.

132. Creswell, "Lineage Endogamy among Maronite Mountaineers," 111.

133. A. Cheikho, "Lubnan: Nathra," *al-Mashriq* 10, no. 9 (1907): 398.

134. Toufic Touma, *Un village de Montagne au Liban*, 107, 110.

135. Personal interview with Najibé Ghanem, daughter of Assaf Khater, 1998.

136. Pharès, *Les Maronites du Liban*, 27.

137. Abu-Najm, "Recherche ethnologique sur le mariage dans un village libanais," 176.

138. Gulick, *Social Structure and Culture Change in a Lebanese Village*, 130.

139. Touma, *Un village de Montagne au Liban*, 83, 87.

140. Williams, *The Youth of Haouch el-Harimi*, 96.

141. Joseph Chamie, *Religion and Fertility: Arab-Christian-Muslim Differentials* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 33.

142. Elias Tweyni, "The Philosophy of Marriage," *Lubnan*, 26 September 1895, 3.

143. Ibid., 1.

144. Elias Tweyni, "The Philosophy of Marriage," *Lubnan*, 3 October 1896, 1.

6. A Woman's Boundaries

1. Salma Kalila, "al-Rajul wal-maraʾ," *Lubnan,* 21 October 1895, 4.

2. Rashid Saʿid Nakhleh, "Keeping the Woman within Her Limits," *Lubnan,* 18 July 1895, 3.

3. For a study of the women's press in Egypt, see Baron, *The Women's Awakening in Egypt,* and Beth Baron, *The Rise of a New Literary Culture: The Women's Press of Egypt, 1892–1919* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1994). Also see Joseph Zeidan, *Arab Women Novelists: The Formative Years and Beyond* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995).

4. In addition to a few instances where the photographs of women authors were presented to a public audience, we find that the pictorial representation of "woman" in these magazines defied the notion of "femininity" as imagined by more conservative writers.

5. Anisa wa-ʿAfifa al-Shartouni, *Nafahat al-wardatayn* (Beirut: al-Matbaʿ al-Lubnaniya, 1909), 28.

6. Ibid., 45.

7. Zaynab Fawaz, *Rasaʾil Zaynabiya* (Cairo: n.p., 1906), 47.

8. Booth, "The Egyptian Lives of Jeanne d'Arc," 175.

9. Rita Felski, *The Gender of Modernity* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995), 4. Felski notes that European women activists' appropriations of public space cannot be ignored in the construction of European modernities.

10. Booth, "The Egyptian Lives of Jeanne D'Arc," 177.

11. "Madame de Stahl," *al-Hasnaʾ* 1, no. 1 (20 May 1909): 3.

12. Booth, "The Egyptian Lives of Jeanne D'Arc," 191.

13. "Madame de Stahl," 3–11.

14. "Mrs. Roosevelt," *al-Hasnaʾ* 1, no. 12 (20 April 1910): 377–381.

15. "The Ottoman Woman and the Constitution," *al-Hasnaʾ* 1, no. 2 (20 June 1909): 56.

16. I am borrowing this distinction from Riley's excellent critique of the term *women,* which she argues keeps women as a category separate from the larger context of humanity. Denise Riley, "Does a Sex Have a History?" in *Feminism and History*, edited by Joan Wallach Scott (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 30.

17. Sarah Abi al-ʿAlaʾ, "Hypocrisy of Men," *al-Saʾih*, 12 September 1912, 6.

18. *al-Muhazab*, 14 December 1907, 2.

19. *Fatat Lubnan*, no. 2 (February 1914): 26.

20. Salma Kalila, "The Man and the Woman," *Lubnan*, no. 108 (2 October 1895): 4.

21. Quoted in Imili Faris Ibrahim, *Adībāt Lubnaniyāt* (Beirut: al-Rayhani, 1964), 34.

22. Quoted in ibid., 50.

23. Dawud Effendi Naqash, "Women and Idleness," *Lubnan,* no. 90 (20 June 1895): 4.

24. Salima Abi Rashed, "Preface," *Fatat Lubnan* 1 (January 1914): 5.

25. Julia Taʿmi Dimashqiya, "Ibn Biladi," *New Woman* 1 (1924): 146.

26. Abbas Mahmoud al-ᶜAqqad, "Education of the Woman," *Minerva* 2, no. 4 (1921): 149.

27. Mary, "Mrs. Huntington," *Minerva* 2, no. 6 (1921): 7.

28. In this, middle-class feminists in Lebanon shared the same strategies as other feminists. For example, Egyptian feminists made similar arguments when demanding voting rights. See, for example, Margot Badran's edited autobiography of Huda al-Shaᶜarawi, *Harem Years: The Memoirs of an Egyptian Feminist (1879–1924)* (London: Virago, 1986); or Cynthia Nelson's *Doria Shafik, Egyptian Feminist: A Woman Apart* (Gainseville: University Press of Florida, 1996). Of course, this same strategy had also been used by U.S. and European feminists in their quest for the vote.

29. Riley, "Does a Sex Have a History?" 28.

30. Quoted in Ibrahim, *Adībāt Lubnaniyāt*, 51–52.

31. Published in Father Butrus Berto, *Majmuᶜat al-muntaqa* (Beirut: Matbaᶜ Kathulikiyya, 1908).

32. Ibid., 13.

33. Quoted in Ibrahim, *Adībāt Lubnaniyāt*, 52.

34. Quoted in ibid., 99.

35. Quoted in ibid.

36. Quoted in ibid., 100.

37. Quoted in ibid.

38. Quoted in ibid., 101–102.

39. Among the news that was published about women in Europe and the United States, we find items like: "European women who demand equal political rights with man, convened a general conference in London that gathered about 300 ladies from 17 nations"; "the Italian Senate approved a Chamber of Commerce law that gives women the right to vote in elections of that chamber." (Both items appeared in *al-Hasnaᵓ*).

40. Quoted in Ibrahim, *Adībāt Lubnaniyāt*, 51.

41. Locating the "simple and pure" in the countryside is not limited to Lebanon. Rather, as Booth notes, Jeanne d'Arc's peasant roots were celebrated in her biographies; "The Egyptian Lives of Jeanne D'Arc," 187–190. Gibran imbued most of his writings with similarly pastoral images. In his story "Martha min Ban," which appeared in his *ᶜAraᵓis al-muruj,* the contrast is drawn sharply between the evil city and the good countryside; Khalil Gibran, *ᶜAraᵓis al-muruj* (Cairo: Maktbat al-Hilāl, 1922). In Haykl's first novel—and arguably the first nonhistorical fiction in the Arab world—Zaynab speaks in equally romantic terms about the peasant woman "seduced" by Hamid, who is the son of the owner of fields where she works and a student in Cairo; Muhammad Husayn Haykl, *Zaynab: Manāzir wa-akhlāq rīfiyah,* 6th ed. (Cairo: Maktbat al-nahda, 1967). In German literature of the 1920s we encounter a similar theme set in different circumstances. In a story in *Junge Kräft*, a professional journal for sales and office employees in Germany, a young working woman is leaving the metropolis for the countryside. She notes, "This city most certainly does not harbor Germany's soul; . . . the soul of Germany resides in the countryside"; quoted in Katharina von Ankum, ed., *Women in the Metropolis: Gender and Modernity in Weimar Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 1.

42. Ibrahim, *Adībāt Lubnaniyāt*, 105.

43. "Donations for the Orphanage," *al-Muhazab*, 27 June 1907, 282.

44. Ibrahim, *Adībāt Lubnaniyāt*, 96.

45. Salma Saʾigh, "The Noble Work of Women's Associations," *Minerva* 2 (1921): 150.

46. It is worth noting here that associations for men (like the Young Muslim Men's Association) were primarily political or "scientific" in orientation. Few were involved in welfare activities that were meant to ameliorate social problems.

47. Quoted in George Kallas, *al-Haraka al-fikriya al-nasawiya fi ʿasr al-nahda, 1849–1929* (Beirut: al-Jil, 1996), 56.

48. "Women's Association in Hasroun," *Minerva* 1 (1920): 45.

49. *Proceedings of the Fourth Women's Conference* (Beirut: al-Matbaʿ Kathulikiyya, 1923), 18.

50. Quoted in Kallas, *al-Haraka al-fikriya al-nasawiya,* 79.

51. Minutes of the Kusba Women's Benevolent Association, April 15, 1912. Quoted in Kallas, *al-Haraka al-fikriya al-nasawiya fi ʿasr al-nahda,* 63.

52. *al-Bashir* 38, no. 1817 (5 August 1908): 3.

53. National Archives, dispatches from the U.S. consuls in Beirut, U.S./208, Ravndal, "Report on Expansion of American Interests," 31 July 1903.

54. *Lubnan*, no. 96 (1 August 1895): 2. The reference to notables in this newspaper indicates families with social prestige (the old elite) as well as new, bourgeois families.

55. Newsletter of Brummana High School, June 10, 1912, Archives of the Old Scholars Association, Brummana High School, Brummana.

56. *al-Bashir* 38, no. 1817 (5 August 1908): 3.

57. One of the earliest essays on the subject appeared in 1903, and the debate lasted through World War I. Writing in 1903, an author lamented that the "young Syrian woman" continued to refrain from appearance on the theater stage out of false modesty. He encouraged these "young women" to follow the suit of American women, "who are truly educated and modern enough" to act in literary productions. Elias Salim, "Our Ladies and Acting," *al-Huda*, 10 March 1903, 2.

58. Dr. Haykal al-Khouri, "The Syrian Woman and Acting," *al-Huda*, 16 January 1908, 5.

59. I am deeply indebted to Patricia Nabti—an anthropologist working on, and in, Lebanon—who generously provided me with copies of papers she has written on this subject in addition to her dissertation (in which the statistics below from the baptismal records are reported): "International Emigration from a Lebanese Village: Bishmizzinis on Six Continents" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1989).

60. Only 17 percent of the godmothers were identified by personal name in the previous period, while in this period the percentage had tripled to 51 percent.

61. Lahad Khatir, *Habouba Khatir: 1853–1929* (Beirut: Catholic Press, 1930), 19.

62. Mar Elias Church, Hadeth al-Jobbé, Sijil 7, 1890–1923.

63. Smithsonian Museum of American History, Alexa Naff Arab American Collection, Series 4-c-5, interview with Mayme Faris, 1964.

64. Ibid., Series 4-c-c, interview with Elizabeth Beshara, Spring 1962.

65. Yusuf Jirjis Zakham, "Need to Place a Limit or Establish a Law to Prohibit the Emigration of the Syrian Woman to America," *al-Huda*, 13 January 1908, 4; 9 July 1908, 4–5; 10 July 1908, 4; 17 July 1908, 4.

66. Ibid., 15 January 1908, 4; emphasis mine.

67. Tannous, "Trends of Social and Cultural Change," 232.

68. The details of this story are based on oral interviews conducted with the living relatives of Saydeh and Assaf in the summer of 1997.

69. Elias Tweyni, "The Philosophy of Marriage," *Lubnan*, 3 October 1895, 1.

70. Elias Tannous, "Marriage," *Lubnan*, 12 September 1895, 4.

71. Zakham, "Need to Place a Limit or Establish a Law to Prohibit the Emigration of the Syrian Woman to America," 13 January 1908, 4.

72. Tweyni, "The Philosophy of Marriage," 1.

73. Ester Muyal, "The Woman's Kingdom: Discourse on Domestic Politics," *al-Hasna*ʾ 1 (July 1909): 52–55.

74. As Riley argued, "'Women' [in Europe] became a modern social category when their place as newly re-mapped entities was distributed among the other collectivities established by these nineteenth-century sciences. 'Men' did not undergo any parallel re-alignments. But 'society' relied on 'man' too, but now as the opposite which secured its own balance. The couplet of man and society, and the ensuing riddle of their relationship, became the life-blood of anthropology, sociology, and social psychology—the endless problem of how the individual stood vis-à-vis the world. . . . [Women] were not the submerged opposite of man, and as such only in need of being fished up; they formed, rather, a kind of continuum of sociality against which the political was set. 'Man in society' did not undergo the same kind of immersion as did woman. He *faced* society, rather; a society already permeated by the feminine." Riley, "Does a Sex Have a History?" 30.

75. Almost every literary writer in the *mahjar* or in Lebanon spoke, in a spiritual language, of love as a force that elevates lovers to the level of gods. See the short stories of Khalil Gibran and Mikhail Nuᶜaymi and the journalistic essays of Elias Tweyni and ᶜAfifa Karam among others.

76. Tannous, "Marriage," 4.

77. Tammam Dawud, "Life of the Young Man and Woman and the Duties of the Mother," in *Proceedings of the Fourth Women's Conference*, 19.

78. See Roger Allen, *The Arabic Novel: An Historical and Critical Introduction* (Manchester: University of Manchester Press, 1982); Roger Allen, Hilary Kilpatrick, and Ed de Moor, eds., *Love and Sexuality in Modern Arabic Literature* (London: Saqi Books, 1995).

79. *Fatat Lubnan* 1 (January 1914): 19, and 1 (March 1914): 26.

80. Richard T. Gray, *Stations of the Divided Subject: Contestation and Ideological Legitimation in German Bourgeois Literature, 1770–1914* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1995), 2.

81. *Lubnan*, 1 June 1907, 4.

82. *Lubnan*, 1 October 1895, 4.

83. *Lubnan*, 11 November 1895, 4.

84. Tannous, "Marriage," 4.

85. des Villettes, *La Vie des femmes dans un village Maronite libanais*, 44.

86. Articles of this nature were published in *Lubnan*, *al-Bashir*, *al-Hasna*ʾ, *Fatat Lubnan*, *al-Muqtataf* (an Egyptian magazine published by Lebanese immigrants), and *al-Huda* in New York.

87. Gibran, *Spirits Rebellious,* 53.

88. Gray, *Stations of the Divided Subject,* 5.

89. *al-Muhazab*, 14 December 1907, 1–2.

7. Epilogue

1. Akram Fouad Khater, "Assaf: A Peasant of Mount Lebanon," in *Struggle and Survival in the Middle East,* ed. Edmund Burke III (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

2. Among these areas was a change in the ideological definition and social articulation of sectarian identities. Throughout this book, I have only alluded to issues of religious sects because they are outside the scope of this particular study. Yet, it is important to quickly note the dramatic changes brought about in this cultural construct and social category because it helps us understand further the "traditional modernity" of Lebanon. Since most of the emigrants were Christians, the middle class which we have been discussing was perforce drawn out of that sect. This fact led to a bifurcation in cultural and socioeconomic development and only opened even further an already widening gap between Maronites and Druzes. Sectarianism—an identity derived out of religious affiliation—was an element of political and social life that was being brought to the fore during the nineteenth century, as Makdisi clearly demonstrates in his book *The Culture of Sectarianism*. Makdisi disputes the notion that sectarianism had been an eternally static and forceful feature in Mount Lebanon. Rather, he convincingly illustrates that Ottoman reform, European colonialism, and local elite political interests coalesced to make sectarianism a paramount force in the political and social life of Mount Lebanon.

Emigrants continued this process both in the *mahjar* and on their return. During the years spent overseas, many emigrants came to enunciate their identity in sectarian terms. Debates broke out among Maronites and Greek Orthodox emigrants, and they escalated to the point where a few emigrants were killed in Brooklyn, New York, over sectarian matters. On an equally intense and more regular level, the Maronite newspaper *al-Huda* began to differentiate a Lebanese national identity from the dominant Ottoman imperial notion of citizenship. Religion figured easily and powerfully in this construction. It was a line of association which the Maronite Church had used since the sixteenth century to establish protective links with European powers (mostly France). However, in America in the late nineteenth century, a new connection was made between religion and the level of a society's progress. The "Christian" West cast a formidable imperial shadow over the rest of the world and had by then articulated an ideology of cultural supremacy to justify its colonial ventures. Maronite emigrants took up that theme by way of justifying a separate Lebanese nation as the spearhead of "Christian modernity" in a sea of "Muslim backwardness."

When they returned to the villages, emigrants were even more convinced of this matter. Their trappings of wealth—from cuckoo clocks to automobiles—distinguished them not only from their peasant neighbors but also from the Druze community. Every subsequent step toward the making of a middle class was infused with that sectarian separation. As education—particularly of the French variety—spread among the Maronites of the Mountain, as they occupied more of the governmental positions, as they published more of the newspapers, and as they controlled more of the economy, their conviction of superiority only grew. Emboldened by French colonial officials eager to make Lebanon a secure outpost for France and Francophones, many Maronite intellectuals made themselves teleologically different from the Druzes. Harkening to distant Phoenician roots and arguing that the Maronites were always oriented toward the West, these intellectuals sought to distance the community from its Druze neighbors and the general Arab milieu. Some Maronite thinkers argued against such a fiction, but the tide was distinctly against them. Stories of massacres of Maronites at the hands of "Muslims" during the 1860 civil war were embellished and published to convince anyone who had doubts that the fortunes of the community rested with "Mother France" and not with the "treacherous" Druzes. In this manner, a historical outcome of emigration was interpreted as a timeless and unbridgeable difference between these two communities—a self-fulfilling act of imagination which drove them further apart and had tragic and violent consequences.

3. Edward Said's *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978) was the first book to systematically present the historical attempts of "Western" intellectuals, artists, and politicians to construct an "Orient" that is the complete opposite of the "Occident." Since then, a steady stream of books and articles has refined our understanding of the causes and the process of the multifaceted act of imagining an Other.

4. Quoted in Ibrahim, *Adībāt Lubnaniyāt,* 49.

5. Ibid.

6. Of course, this should not unduly surprise us; similar debates are still continuing today in the United States—supposedly one of the most "modern" places on earth.

7. For a look at how this process played out in the working-class suburbs of Beirut, see Fouad I. Khūri, *From Village to Suburb: Order and Change in Greater Beirut* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975). Although it concentrates for the most part on Shi'a emigration from South Lebanon to the southern suburbs, this book also discusses the formation of clan politics through family associations.

8. ʿAfifa Karam, "The Emotions of the Woman," *al-Huda,* 29 March 1906, 3.

9. Yusuf Jirjis Zakham, "Need to Place a Limit or Establish a Law to Prohibit the Emigration of the Syrian Woman to America," *al-Huda,* 15 January 1908, 4.

10. Several scholar have addressed this problem. Among the more notable articles is Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, "Placing Women's History in History," *New Left Review* 33 (1982): 45–64, in which she warns against constructing an alternate "herstory" and the ahistorical employment of patriarchy as a category. A later and more detailed work by Joan Wallach Scott sounds similar alarms. In her book *Gender and the Politics of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999),

she provides a searching critique of women's history as incorporated into social history (thus occluding gender) or as "herstory" (thus marginalizing women).

11. Some of the literary work of Gibran and other Lebanese authors used pastoral images derived from peasant life to counteract the stultifying nature of middle-class modernity and to expose the hypocrisy of its morals and mores. Yet, ironically, Gibran and his cohorts lived very much within the sphere of modernity, and—with a few notable exceptions (particularly Nu^{c}aymi)—did not seek to move to the centers of their romanticized "natural" world: the village in Mount Lebanon.

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